Reshaping the Threat Environment: Personalism, Coups, and Assassinations

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Abstract

Dictators shape regime structures to counter the threats they face. Personalization entails the progressive accumulation of power in the hands of the dictator to minimize internal threats from organized elites in the military and party. However, elites have incentives to resist the personalization to avoid being marginalized by personalist strongmen. We argue that as personalism increases, rival elites, less able to coordinate coup attempts, turn to strategies that do not require substantial elite coordination: assassinations. At low levels of personalism, elites coordinate insider coups to oust the ruler, reshuffling leadership and still retaining power. At middle levels of personalism, elites organize regime-change coups as reshuffling coups become more difficult. At high levels of personalism, even regime-change coups become difficult to mount, and increasingly marginalized and desperate rivals turn to assassinations. We test these expectations with new data on personalism, assassination and coup attempts, covering all autocracies over the 1946-2010 period.

Keywords: *authoritarianism*, *personalism*, *assassination*, *coups d'état*

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Introduction

Dictators have always had to contend with irregular threats to their rule. Even today, when most autocracies try to regulate access to power with elections, coups and assassinations still occur. Bashar al-Assad, for example, has faced more than one assassination attempt since the Syrian civil war broke out in 2011, including an opposition missile attack on his convoy during his mother's funeral in 2016. Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro survived a drone strike while giving a speech at a military event in August 2018. Since then, regime opponents in Venezuela have tried almost all tactics in their toolkit to oust Maduro: declaring Juan Guaidó as a self-proclaimed interim president (January 2019), launching a popular uprising-cum-coup attempt (April 2019), signaling openness to U.S. military intervention (May 2019), and sponsoring a bungled invasion attempt by some exiled Venezuelan troops and two former U.S. Green Beret mercenaries (May 2020).

Given uncertainty and opposing interests of intra-regime bargains, the logic of political survival motivates dictators to shape the organizational configuration of their regimes to manage the potential for conflict with and challenges from their inner circle. For their part, autocratic regime elites are interested in keeping the regime in power but also in retaining and even augmenting their influence vis-à-vis the ruler and other regime members. The resulting power struggles within regimes may result in two very different equilibrium outcomes (Svolik 2009). In some regimes, dictators institutionalize power-sharing mechanisms that give regime elites access to decision-making and rents in predictable ways, regulate succession rules, and co-opt opposition groups (Gandhi 2008; Magaloni 2008; Svolik 2012; Meng 2020). Institutions may thus reduce elites' incentives to risk a (regime change) coup,[1] even while enhancing their capacity to constrain the leader by credibly threatening (and sometimes executing) leader reshuffling coups.

In other regimes, dictators exploit informational asymmetries and resource advantages to progressively accumulate power, undermine the resources and coordination capacity

1. See, inter alia, Svolik (2012), Bove and Rivera (2015), Frantz and Stein (2017), and Woo and Conrad (2019). Notably, the prior established literature linking institutions to reduced coup risk does not make the distinction between reshuffling and regime change coups that is central to our argument.

of their inner circle, and loosen their dependence on organizations that launched them to power (Haber 2006; Svolik 2012, Chapter 3). Personalism, the outcome of this second dynamic, varies across regimes and over time (Wright 2021), and also entails unexplored trade-offs between types of irregular threats against the ruler. We begin to fill this gap by presenting a novel theory of how personalism shapes the risk of reshuffling coups, regime change coups, and assassinations.[2] We argue that the types of threats a dictator faces are not static, at least in part because dictators strategically act to shape the organizational configuration of their regimes to deal with rivals and minimize menaces to their tenure.

In short, personalization generally boosts incentives to oust the leader even as it gradually erodes rivals' capacity to do so. As a result, the nature of rebellion technologies changes and, hence, there is a *non-linear* relationship between the degree of personalism and the likelihood of coups and assassinations. At low levels of personalism, elites have the ability to coordinate a reshuffling coup and replace the leader from the inside in light of policy disagreements or perceived opportunism. Under partial personalization, increasingly marginalized elites have motives to risk a regime change coup. Yet successful personalization re-shapes the composition of the support coalition and places (political and security) organizations under the direct control of the leader, thus diminishing insiders' mobilization ability and incentives to credibly oust the leader in a coup. Out of other options, rivals may turn to assassination out of desperation. Our empirical results show that as autocrats concentrate more power in their hands, reshuffling coup risk declines but regime change coup risk increases (up to mid-levels of personalism). Finally, as all coup risk subsides, assassination risk peaks at the highest levels of personalism.

This paper makes several contributions to the literature on comparative authoritarianism, civil-military relations, and political violence. First, our theory links internal power dynamics in autocracies to an important subset of rebellion technologies to oust dictators: assassinations and two types of coups. We thus bring assassinations into a theory of autocratic survival, enabling a better understanding of the trade-offs person-

2. We recognize that dictators face other threats as well, both foreign and domestic. In related work, for example, we examine the influence of personalism on the threat of mass uprisings.

alism carries. Conceptually, coup plotters plan to seize power from but not necessarily kill the leader, whereas assassins attempt to kill the leader without seizing power. Coup attempts require more trust, communication, and coordinated action among multiple actors not just to carry out the deed, but also, crucially, to rule in the targeted leader's stead. Assassins, in contrast, face a lower risk of getting caught at the planning stage but also more uncertainty and a higher risk of punishment during and after the attempt.

Although not as frequent as coups, which receive much more scholarly attention, assassinations are nonetheless an important technology of rebellion (Iqbal and Zorn 2008; Jones and Olken 2009; Bell 2019). Our original data on 151 assassination attempts (39 successful) from 1946 to 2010 shows that attempts to kill dictators are nearly 50 percent more common than prior studies found. Prior leading studies of assassinations suffer from some key limitations.[3] All rely on samples of both dictatorships and democracies, without carefully considering how power struggles differ in the former. Most analyze successful assassinations in isolation from other challenges, ignore failed assassination attempts, and/or include assassinations of non-leaders that likely have distinct determinants.

Second, in contrast to literature showing a linear negative effect of institutions on overall coup risk, we show that the effects of personalism differ across coup types. In particular, we distinguish between reshuffling and regime change coups, that is, between coups that replace the ruler but not the regime and coups that do both. Conceptually, reshuffling coups offer a form of accountability for regime elites, and may strengthen regimes by enabling leadership rotation among the ruling group. By contrast, regime change coups represent raw contests for ultimate power between alternative ruling groups.[4]

Finally, much of the literature on authoritarian politics focuses on institutions as a solution to the problem of authoritarian power-sharing. By contrast, we show how the opposite process of personalization has important implications for strategies of rebellion and political survival. Strongman rule is not a relic of the Cold War. Personalism is in

3. See, inter alia, Iqbal and Zorn (2006, 2008), Jones and Olken (2009), Torgler and Frey (2013), Perliger (2017), and Serban et al. (2018).

4. The determinants of these two coup types often differ. For example, terrorism prompts reshuffling coups, while protests may trigger regime change coups (Aksoy et al. 2015).

fact on the rise and has quickly become the most common type of non-democratic regime (Kendall-Taylor et al. 2017).[5] In contrast to static and binary regime type classifications that code regimes as personalist or not, we use the new time-varying measure of the degree of personalism in dictatorships from Geddes et al. (GWF, 2018) that allows us to capture the dynamic effects of personalism within regimes over time.

Personalism and Irregular Threats

Relations between the ruler and his support group are ridden with tensions and uncertainty, especially in a regime's early months or years. Once in power, dictators have incentives to neutralize threats from their inner circle so as to consolidate their position. For their part, elites want to influence policy decisions and the distribution of rents as well as constrain the ruler's control over political appointments. They thus have an incentive to threaten to replace the dictator if they suspect or detect opportunistic attempts at excluding them. Their priority is to avoid being sidelined or eliminated by would-be strongmen, while striving to maintain collegiality and institutionalize power-sharing.

Consequently, dictators' most immediate threats stem typically from members of his launching group. Existing research largely treats coups – or the threat of one – as insiders' key (and often only) rebellion technology (e.g. Svolik 2012). As Geddes et al. (2018, 72) note, dictators' "careers can end in two ways other than natural death: the overthrow of the regime or the ouster of the dictator despite regime continuity." We add "unnatural" death (i.e. assassination) as a third possibility. Indeed, our new data identify a non-trivial number of assassination attempts against dictators since World War II, of which 26 percent succeed. While coups were more common in Latin America, a region rife with military juntas during the Cold War, assassinations are more heavily concentrated in the Middle East and North Africa (see figure 1), a region where strongmen often prevailed.

Interactions between a dictator and his elite supporters may follow two distinct tra-

5. Personalism also tends to promote nuclear proliferation (Way and Weeks 2014), international conflict (Weeks 2014; Colgan and Weeks 2015), civil war (Roessler 2011), and repression (Frantz et al. 2019).

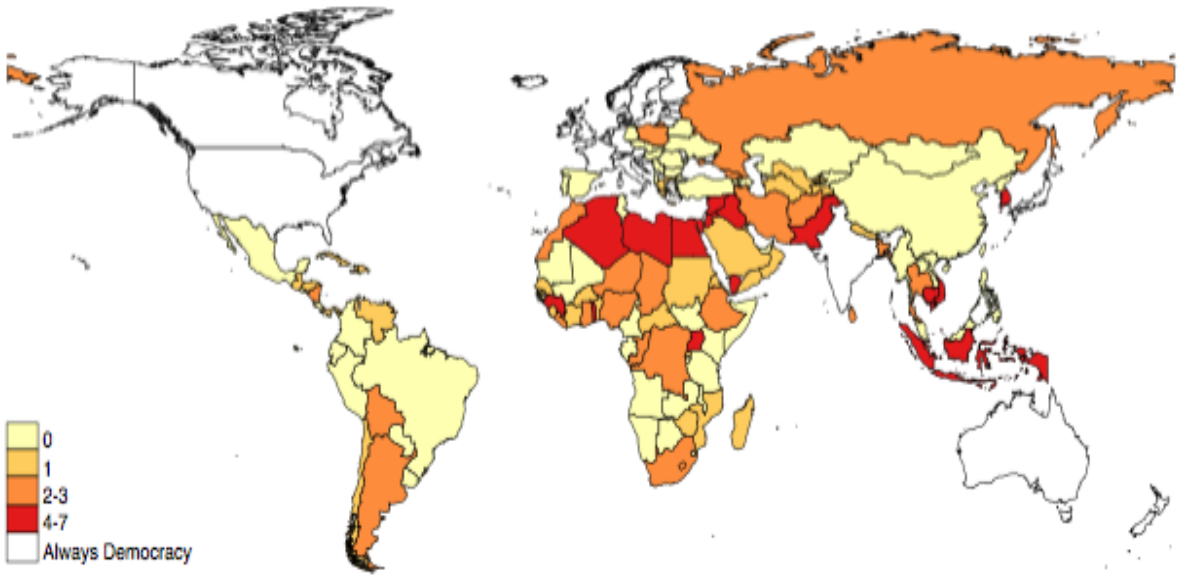

Figure 1: ***Assassination attempts against dictators, 1946–2010.***

jectories (Svolik 2009). One results in an equilibrium of institutionalized power-sharing, where initial allies retain the ability to credibly oust the dictator should he deviate from their bargain. In non-personalized regimes, political institutions such as parties and legislatures help enforce power-sharing agreements by establishing formal procedures to monitor and constrain a leader's power, alleviating commitment problems, and providing a predictable framework for resolving differences, regulating access to office, making policy concessions, and even managing succession (e.g. Gandhi 2008; Magaloni 2008; Ezrow and Frantz 2011). Power-sharing arrangements carry a trade-off concerning regime threats though. It generally increases insiders' ability to oust the ruler even while decreasing their incentives to do so (Meng 2020; Paine 2020). And, while they lower the risk of coups (Svolik 2012; Bove and Rivera 2015; Frantz and Stein 2017) and other violent challenges (Cheibub, Gandhi, and Vreeland 2010; Bartusevičius and Skaaning 2018), some suggest that they make collective dissent more likely to occur by heightening citizens' grievances and reducing the costs of mobilization (Fjelde 2010; Woo and Conrad 2019).

Personalism, we argue, entails a more tumultuous survival trajectory for leaders. Dictators' motives to concentrate power are strongest when seizure groups are factionalized, undisciplined, and lack a unifying revolutionary ideology (Levitsky and Way 2013; Ged-

des et al. 2018), which breeds a security dilemma within the regime and renders political commitments not credible (Roessler 2011). Under such conditions, would-be strongmen seek to exclude distrusted groups and control powerful organizations (e.g. pre-existing parties and the military). They often rely on ascriptive identities, such as family, ethnicity, or personal ties to select loyal agents. The outcome may result in an equilibrium in which a dictator successfully accumulates power, marginalizes members of his inner circle, and undermines constraining institutions (e.g. Bratton and Walle 1994; Svolik 2012; Weeks 2014).[6] These strategies, leading to the exclusion of inside rivals, entail important trade-offs. For example, protection against inside coups may increase the risk of outsider challenges such as insurgencies (Roessler 2011) or mass uprisings (Grundholm 2020).[7] We extend this logic in several ways to offer a more nuanced understanding of the dynamic changes personalism causes on the threat environment. First, we distinguish between coup types and argue that insiders substitute one type of coup for another as personalism intensifies. Second, we include assassinations as a (so far overlooked) rebellion technology that is an important part of the trade-offs underpinning personalism.

These two processes – power-sharing versus personalism – generate opposite dynamics for the incentives and capabilities of elites in the support coalition and opponents to rebel against the leader and, hence, different trade-offs. In contrast to power-sharing strategies, personalism initially creates incentives for elites to rebel against the incumbent. But, if successful, personalism also diminishes their ability to do so. Further, replacing rivals in the ruling coalition with loyalists changes the composition of the coalition that keeps the leader in power, such that newly ascendant elites have preferences more closely aligned

6. Personalism and formal institutions often co-exist. When they do, institutions are not effective tools for monitoring and power-sharing but are instruments for co-opting new members, counter-balancing and controlling existing elites, or rubber stamping the leader's unilateral decisions and appointments (e.g. Lust-Okar 2005; Geddes et al. 2018). The mere existence of formal political institutions does not mean that these institutions act as effective constraints or accountability mechanisms. To do so, they must empower and facilitate elites' coordination (Meng 2020). As Wright (2021, 2) correctly stresses, "[f]or formal institutions to structure political interaction that further accountability or constraint, humans, often organized into groups such as parties or militaries, must act collectively to enforce them."

7. Note, however, that Roessler's study only considers sub-Saharan Africa, where ethnic cleavages are especially salient and facilitate the recruitment of persecuted kinsmen. Further, Grundholm's study examines whether ongoing mass campaigns are more likely to result in leader or regime failure at different levels of personalism, but not whether personalism influences the onset of such campaigns.

with the ruler's – also reducing incentives for rebelling. We thus should not necessarily expect personalism to shape elite rebellion linearly – that is, always increasing or decreasing its likelihood. Personalism alters the technologies rivals employ to challenge the leader, namely, coups and assassinations, as their mobilizational resources and capacity for collective action are gradually eroded but their disposition to rebel strengthen. This trade-off still leaves the leader more secure in power since coups are not only more likely to occur but also have a much higher success rate than assassinations.[8]

Reshuffling Coups

We distinguish between *reshuffling* coups, which only replace the leader atop the regime, and *regime change* coups, which oust the leader and replace the group with the power to select the leader and make key policy and personnel decisions (Aksoy et al. 2015). This coup type distinction allows us to better theorize how personalism shapes rebellion technologies in dictatorships and how rivals substitute one technology for another. Coups are a technology of rebellion only available to regime insiders, involving at least a current active member of the regime's military or security apparatus, sometimes in alliance with other civilian elites and even prior defectors or outsiders. Coups are a crucial mechanism for elites to respond to power grabs by the leader, and thus reflect dynamic shifts in the balance of power between the dictator and his support coalition (Svolik 2009).

Reshuffling coups aim to replace the leader but still protect the interests of other members of the inner circle; they are, therefore, a critical technology for well-positioned members of the ruling coalition to hold leaders accountable for policy failures – such as poor economic performance, interstate war losses, and internal turmoil (e.g. Kim 2016; Bell and Sudduth 2017) – or, most importantly, for a leader's (actual or suspected) opportunistic attempts to alter the standing internal balance of power and renege on

8. According to Geddes et al.'s (2014) data, which we use to identify autocratic regimes, the baseline probability of a dictator experiencing a coup attempt is 0.076 (348 instances in 4,591 autocratic country-years), while the likelihood of experiencing an assassination attempt is just 0.030 (136 instances in 4,591 country-years), less than half that of a coup. Moreover, the success rate of coups is 47.1%, while that of assassination attempts is just 24.3%. See also Table 1 below.

power-sharing agreements (Geddes 2003; Svolik 2012; Aksoy et al. 2015). Reshuffling coups thus offer top elites a mechanism to preserve – or improve – their position, to sanction (oust) the leader, prevent personalization, and preserve the regime; such dynamics are typically observed in military juntas, where leadership rotation helps maintain power-sharing and insiders have direct access to the military apparatus. Motivation to oust the ruler emerges in regimes that suffer mutual mistrust, commitment problems, and factional or personal disputes within the ruling coalition, which may be resolved using irregular methods of leadership rotation when such mechanisms are not sufficiently well institutionalized and insiders' capacity to act from the inside is high.[9] Such coups require that participants are part of the ruling coalition and, thus, have privileged information and access to organizational resources that make possible coordinated action from the inside.

Thus, using a categorical regime classification, Kim and Kroeger (2018) find that reshuffling coups are more likely in collegial military regimes. For example, internal disagreements led to the reshuffle of Ould Haidallah as head of Mauritania's ruling Comité Militaire de Salut National (CMSN) in December 1984. Ould Haidallah drew the ire of other CMSN members for his strongman pretensions, particularly his unilateral decision to recognize Polisario's government-in-exile in 1984. The two officers who were dismissed from the cabinet for protesting this policy in March 1984 – Ould Taya (the defense minister) and Lt. Col. Anne Ahmadou Babaly (the planning minister) – spearheaded the bloodless palace coup against Haidallah less than eight months later (Pazzanita 2008).

We posit that at low levels of personalism – when power-sharing agreements are still largely in force and elites hold enough power to coordinate a unified response to initial signs of regime narrowing – we should observe *inside* factions attempt to oust the leader and, hence, more reshuffling coups. Reshuffling coup risk should decrease as personalism rises, since the progressive marginalization of the seizure group undermines its capacity for a unified response. Initial moves toward gaining influence over membership to the inner circle create winners and losers within the ruling coalition, while maneuvers such

9. Conversely, in regimes with inherited strong parties, monitoring and accountability mechanisms are likely to be better formalized, making the use of irregular ousters less necessary.

as the creation of a support party or parallel security units create obstacles to insiders' coordination. Having their ability to push for leadership rotation curtailed but still able to leverage their (declining) access to the state and security apparatus, excluded factions are likely to turn rapidly to regime change coups as a rebellion technology (see below).

Our first theoretical expectation is a monotonically negative relationship between personalism and reshuffling coups, ceteris paribus. *At low levels of personalism, the risk of reshuffling coups should be high, but that risk should diminish as personalism increases.*

Regime Change Coups

Elite coups might fail or may never be staged if they are too costly or the observed signal of opportunism is insufficiently clear (Svolik 2009). As a result, some dictators may manage to start solidifying their position vis-à-vis the ruling coalition by exploiting informational advantages, privileged access to state resources, and elites' often insurmountable collective action problems (Svolik 2012; Geddes et al. 2018; Fails 2019) as well as by skilfully pitting some factions against others (Acemoglu, Verdier, and Robinson 2004). Decisive power grabs manifest themselves as the leader creates new organizations directly under his command – such as a support party or a loyal paramilitary organization – or distributes formal offices to close supporters – normally individuals with personal ties to him.

As power accumulation progresses, dictators face a lower risk of a reshuffling coup but are by no means safe. With more visible power grabs, newly marginalized groups and those fearing they may be the next victims have powerful motives to resist their gradual (but evident) loss of influence in the regime and especially the security apparatus. Indeed, coup-proofing moves are often met with preemptive reactions and, hence, increase short-term coup risk (De Bruin 2018; Song 2018). Similarly, attempts to alter promotion and recruitment policies to add and privilege loyalists create grievances among elites that may provoke coup attempts (Horowitz 1985; Roessler 2011; Harkness 2016; Sudduth 2017).

When sidelined elites and regime outsiders strike back against growing personalization with a coup, they do not simply remove the leader. They also oust the newly appointed

and promoted inner circle and install a new ruling group (i.e. regime). Excluded factions thus substitute regime change coups for reshuffling ones. This implies an initial increase in regime change coup risk as personalization rises from low levels. In this scenario, elites are still in a position – albeit increasingly precarious – to leverage partial access to the state apparatus and employ a rebellion technology, coups, pertaining to insiders. Concretely, marginalized groups that maintain some standing in the state apparatus or defectors who ally with current factions of the security forces organize to oust the leader and his increasingly exclusive group of handpicked personal loyalists.[10]

Consider the case of Uganda. After President Milton Obote promoted Idi Amin to major general in 1969 to counter rival factions, Obote reorganized his support coalition a second time once Amin amassed sufficient power to credibly threaten him. Looking to reduce the weight and influence of groups loyal to Amin in the security forces, Obote created the General Service Unit, a loyalist counterbalancing organization headed by Obote's cousin, and further promoted officers from allied Langi and Acholi groups (Decalo 1976). Fearing also that Amin had been involved in a failed assassination attempt on Obote in late 1969, Obote "promoted" Amin to an administrative position in 1970. In response to these moves and anticipating further marginalization, Amin staged a regime change coup in 1971, toppling Obote and in the process changing the regime to exclude civilian leaders and ethnic groups supporting him (Rowe 1992, 25-26).

The likelihood of regime coups should, however, decrease at high levels of personalism through two coup-proofing mechanisms that reduce elites' ability and motives to react from the inside. First, successful personalization normally entails taking firm control of internal security forces and creating loyal organizations under their direct command, which "increases the dictator's information advantage over other members of the dictatorial elite as well as his ability to use violence against them" (Geddes et al. 2018, 80). Newly created parties may serve dictators to mobilize supporters to confront potential

10. In coding coups, the Colpus dataset took great care to exclude cases of prior defection – where ousted military officers who defected prior to the coup event were the perpetrators. They did, however, include coups where a prior defector (i.e. former military officer who defected at a prior date) comes back with allies who are current, active members of the military to attempt a coup.

coup attempts (Geddes et al. 2018); new personalized security forces may reliably protect the leader (Escribà-Folch, Böhmelt, and Pilster 2019) and hinder inter-unit coordination necessary to stage a coup (Böhmelt and Pilster 2015; De Bruin 2018).

Second, strongmen who take control over the composition of the party executive or security force command positions often promote and appoint co-ethnics and relatives, while purging, dismissing, demoting, or rotating suspected foes. This not only undermines elites' collective action capacity, but also re-shapes the incentive structure of the inner circle. Handpicked loyalists have worse "outside" options and thus have a stronger incentive to be willing to take risks – such as using violent force to deter and counter a coup attempt – to protect the leader and their newly ascendant position in the inner circle.[11] As personalization mounts, then, not only are the fates of members of the inner circle more closely tied to the leader's fate, but adding loyalists also enhances the ruler's information on elites' preferences, thereby decreasing monitoring costs (Song 2018).

Our second theoretical expectation is that the risk of regime change coups increases as personalism rises from low levels, but then decreases as personalism reaches high levels. *There is thus an inverted, U-shape relationship between personalism and regime change coup risk, with the highest likelihood of these coups at mid-levels of personalism.*

Assassinations

Assassins aim to kill the leader, but do not necessarily try to seize power for themselves or allied plotters. Murdering the dictator is an alternative (riskier) rebellion technology for both marginalized elites and regime outsiders. The goal is to permanently oust a particular ruler and, possibly, trigger further political change. In contrast, coupmakers require a plan not just to carry out the deed, but also to rule in the targeted leader's stead. Coups therefore require more communication, coordination, equipment, and trust to mobilize multiple actors to seize power than do assassination attempts.

11. While dictators may want *politically* incompetent subordinates to serve as loyalists (Egorov and Sonin 2011; Lee and Schuler 2019), the latter need not be incompetent to be loyal; subordinates only need low-value "outside" options to endogenously induce loyalty to the leader (Zakharov 2016).

Two scenarios favor the occurrence of assassination attempts: fledgling regimes with very little personalism and highly personalized regimes. In regimes with low personalism but with still unsettled and un-institutionalized power-sharing bargains, competition over the distribution of rents and power can amplify any existing personal mistrust and rivalries within the ruling group. The absence of well-established regular interactions and formal monitoring mechanisms in the early stages of a new autocracy, commitment problems, and factional struggles result in security dilemmas that might turn violent (Svolik 2012; Roessler 2011). In these contexts, individual rivals or weak factions within the ruling group with little access within the military apparatus might take advantage of the opportunities provided by their insider status to get close access to the ruler and kill him. Additionally, newly displaced groups recently sidelined by the takeover of a new regime but still sufficiently organized may seek revenge or simply act to prevent a nascent regime from consolidating.[12] The assassination of Ibrahim al-Hamdi, then-President of the Military Ruling Council governing North Yemen, in his third-year tenure is illustrative. Although his brother was then-commander of the elite security apparatus, al-Hamdi had not cemented his personal power enough to prevent his assassination by a group of military officers along with his brother. Al-Hamdi was allegedly murdered in 1977 by regime elements who opposed al-Hamdi's army reforms and his rapprochement toward South Yemen that would have resulted in the entry of new elites (Burrowes 2016).

The risk of assassination, however, should be highest at high levels of personalism for several reasons. First, purges, marginalization, and exclusion of elites breed fear and resentment among formerly privileged allies now turned outsiders, defectors, and enemies.[13] For example, Hamani Diori, Niger's first President, escaped an assassination attempt in April 1965 by members of the Sawaba, a party created by Djibo Bakary – Diori's cousin and political rival who headed the pre-independence government – after he

12. Note that our models below control for a leader's time in office, which allows us to separate the effect of time from that of low personalism yet competition.

13. Aggrieved individuals still keeping a position in the state apparatus may exploit some opportunity to execute an attack, while groups out of power (even if only partially displaced or demoted) may leverage their connections to members of the security apparatus in an attempt to eliminate the ruler.

was expelled from the ruling party and banned by Diori in 1959 (e.g. Walraven 2009). Park Chung-hee's assassin, the Director of the Korean Central Intelligence Agency, though a close friend and regime insider himself, feared being marginalized by rival hard-liners in Park's increasingly personalized regime (e.g. Shindonga 1996).

Second, highly personalized regimes rely more heavily on discrimination and repression of large segments of society to retain power (Frantz et al. 2019). More intense state-led repression creates deep grievances among systematically oppressed groups or minorities against the leader, incentivizing violent retaliation (Iqbal and Zorn 2006). Small dissident groups unable to sustain an armed insurgency may seek to kill the dictator. For example, members of the Dawa, a Shiite Islamist opposition party, tried to ambush and kill Saddam Hussein in 1982 in Dujail. Similarly, in 1957, armed student revolutionaries attacked the presidential palace and attempted to kill Cuba's President, Fulgencio Batista.

At the same time, as the leader accumulates power and comes to embody the regime himself (Radtke 2019) such that there usually are no institutionalized procedures for leadership succession, personalism reinforces two sets of related ideas that make the leader a strategically valuable target. First, a highly personalist ruler is more likely to be seen as a highly capable leader and, also, as being ultimately responsible for and the sole perpetrator of the abuses and grievances inflicted upon society and opponents (Iqbal and Zorn 2006, 492). Second, plotters are more likely to expect that killing a strongman (as opposed to first among equals) will automatically make the whole regime crumble and give way to profound political change (Torgler and Frey 2013, 362).[14]

Finally, while high personalism creates powerful incentives to eliminate the leader, it also decreases the ability to do so via organized collective challenges (Svolik 2009, 478). As argued above, extreme personalization severely undermines both inside rivals and outside groups' ability to stage coups that would enable perpetrators to seize power.[15] Moreover,

14. See Geddes et al. (2018, 203-06) on this point. Similarly, because personalist dictators such as Saddam Hussein often pursue risky, aggressive foreign policies (e.g. nuclear weapons programs), they are more likely to antagonize other countries (Peceny, Beer, and Sanchez-Terry 2002; Reiter and Stam 2003). Consequently, foreign governments may also develop motives to encourage or sponsor assassinations – often by domestic groups – to eliminate personalist rulers that threaten their national security.

15. By contrast, prior accounts contend that, while incentives might be strong, more powerful leaders

by engaging in more preventive repression, personalization also helps prevent the onset of major nonviolent protest campaigns. Assassination is thus an almost desperate technology of rebellion that requires fewer organizational resources and participants.[16] Under such circumstances, excluded elites might substitute assassination attempts for coups; prior defectors, repeatedly discriminated groups, and clandestine opposition organizations may not have substantial mobilization capacity to coordinate a well-planned seizure of power, but they may still try to kill the dictator.[17] Assassination plots typically involve only a handful of loosely-connected but motivated individuals.

Assassination attempts are indeed often regarded by opponents and foes as the only means left to get rid of personalist rulers. As one of Trujillo's assassins in the Dominican Republic, Antonio Imbert, affirmed in an interview: "the only way to get rid of him was to kill him" (BBC 2011). Similarly, one of the organizers of the drone attack against Maduro stressed that "we have tried every peaceful and democratic way to bring an end to this tyranny that dresses itself as democracy" (Walsh et al. 2019). Even if carefully planned, assassinations are risky. Even if successful, assassins are often killed during the attempt, or arrested, tried, and later executed. Assassins' limited ability for more organized action is reflected in the manner in which assassination attempts typically unfold. Plotters must exploit situations where the leader is physically accessible and vulnerable to gain

can better mitigate the risk of assassination by instilling fear or personality cults (Iqbal and Zorn 2006; Perliger 2015). We see both theoretical and empirical problems in these claims. First, the degree of power is measured using Polity IV's constraints on the executive (xconst) variable, which does not properly capture personalism in autocracies (Wright 2021). Second, most importantly, these works focus on successful assassinations, yet our argument applies to attempts and plots that are deterred from happening, not to the outcome of those attempts, which, as Jones and Olken (2009) show, has a high degree of randomness. By contrast, we argue that it is precisely because they are more powerful that leaders become targets of assassinations attempts and because other technologies requiring more resources and mobilization become increasingly unfeasible that opponents are 'pushed' to consider assassination attempts to eliminate the ruler and trigger further political change. Armed elites' opposition to the strongman might take other forms such as military defections during protests and defectors joining insurgencies (Roessler 2011; Dahl 2016; Grundholm 2020). Yet, these events, which are conditional on outsiders being able to solve collective action problems, are beyond the scope of our paper.

16. Indeed, as noted above, assassination attempts have a low success rate of 24%.

17. Coups require a sufficient number of officers, core military units, and, possibly, civilian allies to successfully seize control of the state apparatus and maintain internal order. Further, coups entail coordination in planning and implementation to succeed (Geddes 1999; Singh 2014). Non-violent protest campaigns require the sustained mobilization of a large number of people and, hence, organizational and coordination resources to overcome (popular) collective action problems (Chenoweth and Stephan 2011).

the physical proximity necessary to carry out *tyrannicide*. In some cases, discontented insiders may still take advantage of their privileged access to the dictator – or his means of transportation – to gain the required physical proximity.[18] However, most attempts occur during leaders' public appearances such as speeches, rallies, or parades; or, alternatively, when leaders are on route to some destination by means of car, helicopter, or plane.[19]

In sum, at low-levels of personalism there are more opportunities to oust the leader, but these opportunities diminish as personalism rises. Once the leaders accumulate substantial power to thwart coordinated action, incentives to kill the leader are strongest, yet other rebellion technologies become unfeasible and assassination may be the only option left. Therefore, *there is a U-shaped relationship between personalism and the risk of assassination attempts, with the highest risk being observed at high levels of personalism.*

Testing the technologies of violent leader replacement

Data To test these expectations, we use three outcome variables that capture different rebellion technologies rivals employ to challenge the dictator: reshuffling coups, regime change coups, and assassinations. The data on 388 coup attempts under dictatorship is from the Colpus dataset, which covers the 1946-2019 period and is documented in Chin, Wright, and Carter (2021)'s *Historical Dictionary of Modern Coups D'état*. All military coup attempts involve a concrete, observable, and unconstitutional action by at least one member of the regime's current military or security apparatus to seize power. However, *reshuffling* coups overthrow the leader but not the regime, whereas *regime change* coups overthrow the leader and regime (Aksoy et al. 2015).

We also distinguish clearly between coup and assassination attempts. Coup makers attempt to seize power for themselves by replacing the incumbent leader or regime. Assassins simply try to kill the regime leader. Coups and assassination attempts can co-occur,

18. For example, Park Chung-hee was shot to death by Kim Jae-gyu while they were having dinner in a safe house in Seoul. The Roman emperors were multiple times assassinated by their Praetorian Guards (e.g. Caligula), Senators (e.g. Julius Caesar), or even by a wrestling partner (e.g. Commodus).

19. For example, President Ranasinghe Premadasa of Sri Lanka was killed in 1993 by a suicide bomber during a May 1st Day rally; and Pinochet a survived machine gun attack on his motorcade.

but this is rarer than one might assume.[20] Although coup attempts can be bloody affairs and may even escalate into civil war-level violence, assassination attempts against the regime leader actually occur in only seven percent of all coup attempts under autocratic regimes (per GWF data) from 1946 to 2010.[21] A key reason that assassination and coup attempts do not co-occur more often is that coups *always* involve regime insiders. Over 96 percent of coup attempts involve one or more active duty troops or official security forces. By contrast, assassination attempts often are perpetrated exclusively by regime outsiders (e.g. lone-wolves or small dissident groups).[22] When they do co-occur, assassination attempts are more likely to involve regime change coup makers than reshuffling coup makers, who are better positioned to execute a coup without killing the leader.

To identify assassination attempts, we collected evidence on 210 candidate assassination attempts against dictators (again, per the GWF data) from 1946 to 2010 identified from over half a dozen major data sets as well as a review of historical sources.[23] We identified a total of 136 assassination attempts against autocratic leaders for which we have personalism data. We excluded 59 candidate events as other types of events (e.g. plots, attempts that did not target the regime leader) and 12 assassination attempts against dictators in their first year who came to power after January 1. A 270-page appendix has narratives and coding justifications for all 210 candidate events.[24]

Our new assassination data makes several contributions. First, this data is more comprehensive than any currently available. Like Jones and Olken (2009), our data

20. The creators of the Colpus dataset were very careful to code assassination attempts as coup attempts whenever the historical evidence available indicates that the attempt to kill the regime leader was part of a larger plot by coup plotters to seize and hold power. For example, the Colpus dataset codes the assassination of Rafael Trujillo, the personalist Dominican dictator, on May 30, 1961, as part of a failed regime change coup attempt because the seven assassins who ambushed Trujillo's car (mostly civilians) were in league with disgruntled officers. For more details on this case, see Appendix H.

21. Empirically, the Archigos dataset (Goemans, Gleditsch, and Chiozza 2009) makes a similar distinction between "irregular" ousters of leaders by military or other government actors (i.e., coups) as opposed to "assassinations by unsupported individuals."

22. It is possible that some "unsupported" assassins are paid by or in league with regime insiders. However, in distinguishing technologies of rebellion, it matters whether regime insiders try to seize power directly as opposed to sponsor an assassination by outsiders.

23. We consulted assassination data from Jones and Olken (2009) and Iqbal and Zorn (2006, 2008), leader exit data (e.g. Goemans, Gleditsch, and Chiozza 2009), coup data that incidentally capture some assassinations (e.g. Powell and Thyne (2011) and Colpus), and event datasets (e.g. Althaus et al. 2019).

24. See Appendix H for a sample of case narratives for events mentioned in the article.

includes failed assassination attempts as well as rarer successful assassinations.[25] This is important because our theory maps onto the data-generating process for attempts – not successes. What is more, if there are unobserved factors that lead to success (conditional on attempt) and we only model success, estimates could be biased. Thus, while it is much easier to identify only assassination successes, we believe modeling attempts will yield less biased estimates of the variables that proxy for our theoretical expectations.

We identify only 33 successful assassinations of dictators (again, who ruled as of January 1 according to the GWF data) from 1946 to 2010, but code more than three times as many (103) failed assassination attempts over the same period. By consulting a wide array of historical sources – from the Proquest database to historical dictionaries to reference works such as Lentz (2002) and Newton (2014) – we are also able to identify 40 assassination attempts that have not been identified in any prior dataset. Second, we are careful to only include assassination attempts against regime leaders and exclude assassinations of other government officials and nominal executives.[26] Many event datasets do not make such distinctions.[27] Third, our data is the first to distinguish between stand-alone assassinations attempts from those that occur during a coup attempt. Of the 136 assassination attempts in our empirical analysis, 108 are stand-alone attempts (see Table A-6) while 28 occur in the context of a coup attempt (see Table A-5). By way of comparison, the most similar data to ours, by Jones and Olken (2009), codes 103 assassination attempts against dictators from 1946 to 2010, but of these only 82 met our definition and actually targeted the regime leader. Interested users can consult Table A-4 to compare our assassination list with prior datasets. Finally, we include a variable to flag *ambiguous* cases so that users can omit cases where some observers expressed concerns over whether the alleged perpetrators actually tried to kill the ruler (see Appendix A 1.2).

For our independent variable, we employ a new continuous index of personalism from

25. Iqbal and Zorn (2006) and all leader datasets only capture successful assassinations.

26. For example, under monarchies, we exclude assassinations of a premier as *not regime leader*.Under *personal* regimes, we only code assassinations against the leader regardless of his formal title. By contrast, Iqbal and Zorn (2006) code successful killings of heads of state, who are not always the regime leader.

27. For example, assassinations in Banks' CNTS data used by Torgler and Frey (2013) includes all politically motivated attempted murders of any "high government official or politician," not just leaders.

GWF for the period 1946-2010 that varies across distinct autocratic regimes and also within them over time. The measure is dynamic in the sense that it records changes in the level of personalism within regimes; it therefore differs from cross-section measures of the concept, such as categorical typologies (i.e. a personalist regime dummy variable), that only take on static values within regimes (Geddes 2003; Weeks 2014). Our index relies on eight observable acts by dictators that are aimed to increase their personal powers relative to the support party (if one exists) and security apparatus. Of the eight components, one concerns appointment power for high office (e.g. cabinet posts), four concern the ability to control security forces or create paramilitary forces that are personally loyal to the dictator, and three concern the ability to create or control the ruling party. A two-parameter item response theory model is used to construct a continuous personalism index that varies each year. This approach is preferable to alternatives (e.g. an additive index) by providing a principled way of identifying the importance of each item.[28]

To preview the results, Table 1 shows the raw data for the three outcomes at different levels of personalism. Although all outcomes are relatively rare events, assassination attempts are rarer than coup attempts. At low levels of personalism, reshuffling coup risk is high (4.4 percent), but declines by almost half to 2.2 percent at middle level of personalism and falls by half again to 1.1 percent at high levels of personalism. For regime change coups, the baseline risk is 4.2 percent at low levels of personalism, rising to 4.6 percent at middle levels before dropping to 3.8 percent at high levels. Finally, assassination risk is 2.1 percent at low levels of personalism, falling to 1.96 percent at middle levels and rising to 2.75 percent at high levels. Thus raw data suggest a monotonic decline in reshuffling coup risk as personalism increases. The relationship is an inverted U-shape for regime change coup risk and U-shaped for assassination risk.

Estimator Our theory implies potential non-linear effects of personalization on technologies of rebellion. However, these expectations are difficult to directly test because they suggest a specific non-linear relationship between variables, perhaps conditional on

28. See Appendix A 1.4 for more detail on the components and construction of the personalism index.

Table 1: Baseline risks of coups and assassinations, by level of personalism

Personalism Level	Average Personalism	Leader Reshuffling Coup	Regime Change Coup	Assassination
Low	0.1046	0.0438	0.0418	0.0209
Middle	0.4278	0.0222	0.0457	0.0196
High	0.7315	0.0111	0.0379	0.0275

Data divided into 3 equally sized groups along the distribution of personalism score.

covariates that might confound. While many applied analyses test for the presence of non-linear relationships by including the explanatory variable of interest and its square in the model specification, this approach forces a particular form of non-linear relationship onto the data and then tests statistical significance of parameter estimates given the assumption about the imposed functional form (Jones and Lupu 2018; Simonsohn 2018).

We instead use Baltagi and Li's (2002) fixed-effects semiparametric estimator (hereafter BL-FE), which mixes a parametric component of a model with a non-parametric component. The advantage of this approach is to allow for (possible) non-linear relationships between a primary variable of interest without imposing a specific functional form on the relationship. The estimator stems from the following equation, where $x_{i,t}\theta$ is the parametric component of the model and $f(z_{i,t})$ is the non-parametric component; α_i are the unit fixed effects; $z_{i,t}$ is the main explanatory variable of interest, for which we do not want to impose a specific functional form; and $y_{i,t}$ is the outcome variable.

$$y_{i,t} = x_{i,t}\theta + f(z_{i,t}) + \alpha_i + \varepsilon_{i,t} \tag{1}$$

The BL-FE estimator deals with α_i via differencing the equation and approximates $f(\cdot)$, a (possibly non-linear) link function, with splines that allow for many possible nonlinear functions relating the conditional variation in each series to the conditional

variation in the other.[29] This approach yields values $\hat{u_{i,t}}$ from the following equation:

$$\hat{u_{i,t}} = y_{i,t} - x_{i,t}\hat{\theta} - \hat{\alpha}_i = f(z_{i,t}) + \varepsilon_{i,t} \tag{2}$$

The function $f(\cdot)$ can then be fit by regressing $\hat{u_{i,t}}$ on $z_{i,t}$ using a non-linear smoother.

In what follows, we report the non-linear fit for both a specification that does not adjust for potential confounders and one that does. These plots provide visual evidence of potential non-linear relationships between personalism and the outcomes of interest. We visually interpret the patterns as (possibly) supportive evidence for our hypotheses. After presenting these results, we then report fully parametric results that offer specific statistical tests of the (possible) relationships shown in the visualizations.

Specification We test the BL-FE estimator, in part, to account for (time-invariant) unit heterogeneity. We know that dictatorships differ from each other as much as they differ from democracy (Geddes 1999). Dictatorships arise from distinct historical political economies and colonial histories (Pepinsky 2014). Some are preceded by democracy or arise in countries with a long history of coups; others were constructed from the ruins of colonial empires or imposed by foreign military powers. These differences both structure opportunities for coup attempts (Iqbal and Zorn 2006) and lay the groundwork for personalization (Geddes et al. 2018; Song and Wright 2018). We thus model regime-case fixed effects that account for both country-specific historical factors, such as the history of democracy, culture, infrastructural power, and colonial legacy as well as regime-specific factors such as how the regime came to power (e.g. in a coup or a rebellion) and its "type" (e.g. electoral vs. non-electoral regimes).[30]

The specification adjusts for a non-linear time trend and time since last event (cubic polynomials). The former accounts for common time-varying changes to the technology of leader replacement as well as shifts in the geostrategic environment (see e.g. Marinov

29. Following Libois and Verardi (2013), we estimate a linear combination of a set of (kth degree) B-splines that stabilizes the non-linear relationship; see Appendix E for a discussion of degree selection.

30. Regime fixed effects subsume single-party / military / personalist / monarchy regime categories.

and Goemans 2014). Duration time polynomials flexibly mimic the censoring mechanisms that comprise standard duration (or survival) models (Carter and Signorino 2010).[31] In addition to a sparse specification with no covariates we also report one with estimates of $\hat{u_{i,t}}$ adjusted for the following (observed) potential confounders in $x_{i,t}$: leader time in power (log), leader age, whether the leader was a member of the military prior to seizing power, GDP per capita (log), oil per capita (log), and civil and international conflict.[32]

Results

Figure 2 reports results of the semiparametric analysis. Because we employ an FE estimator, the marginal effects capture the effect of changes in personalism over time within regimes, not how differences in the level of personalism in distinct autocracies shapes the outcomes. Reflecting the theoretical expectations about how challenges to dictators shift as they consolidate power, these estimates provide insight into the question of: *how does the probability of an event change as the leader concentrates power?* In each plot the gray histogram (bars) shows the in-sample distribution of the personalism scale ($z_{i,t}$), which varies from `0` to `1` (inclusive) along the horizontal axis. The plots in the left column show the semiparametric fit linking personalism to the estimated (partial) probability of an event (e.g. coup or assassination) when there is no covariate adjustment. The plots in the right column show the fit when adjusting for potentially confounding observables.

The top plots show the semiparametric fit for *leader reshuffling coups*. In both plots, the estimated risk of this type of coup is declining monotonically in personalism. This relationship holds irrespective of whether we adjust for covariates. Because the visual fit can be influenced by the location of the estimate at the edges of the plot (i.e. at the highest and lowest values of personalism), we re-estimate each fit, excluding these extreme values of the explanatory variable. The green (lowest) and red (highest) dashed

31. Appendix F shows how the BL-FE semiparametric estimator with adjustment for time since last event (i.e. information that subsumes the lagged outcome) is similar to a dynamic panel model.

32. Appendix C discusses the theory behind potential confounding for these covariates; Appendix A 1.1 provides summary statistics and lists variable sources.

lines in each plot show the shape of the nonparametric fit when we exclude the lowest (green) and highest (red) values of the personalism index. These adjustments do not change the overall observed pattern, though the increasing risk of regime change coup at the low end of the personalism index largely depends on the large group of observations at the lowest personalism level, especially when we do not adjust for covariates.[33]

The middle two plots in Figure 2 show the semiparametric results for regime change coups. The solid blue line indicates the fit when testing the model for all values of personalism. The fit is increasing from 0 to about 0.2 and then decreases from 0.2 to 1; adjusting for covariates shifts the peak of the curve slightly to the right but the same pattern remains. This pattern indicates an inverse U-shaped relationship, with the risk of regime change coups first rising in personalism and then decreasing rapidly.

The bottom two plots show the results for assassination attempts. The solid blue line shows the fit for all values of the explanatory variable: the risk of assassination is declining steeply in personalism at low levels but increases after about 0.15 on the personalism scale. At values of personalism above 0.6, however, the relationship is relatively flat and not monotonically increasing. That said, below 0.6, the estimated fit is consistent with a U-shaped relationship between personalism and assassinations. Finally, when we exclude the lowest values of personalism, shown in green, the decreasing slope at the low end of the personalism scale nearly disappears, especially once we adjust for covariates.

Overall, the semiparametric analysis yields results consistent with theoretical expectations. There is an inverted U-shaped relationship between personalism and regime change coups and the risk of leader reshuffling coups declines in personalism. Finally, there is a U-shaped relationship between personalism and assassinations, at least through the low and middle levels of personalism.

33. These observations constitute over 16 percent of the sample; over 100 regimes have this lowest level of personalism at some point.

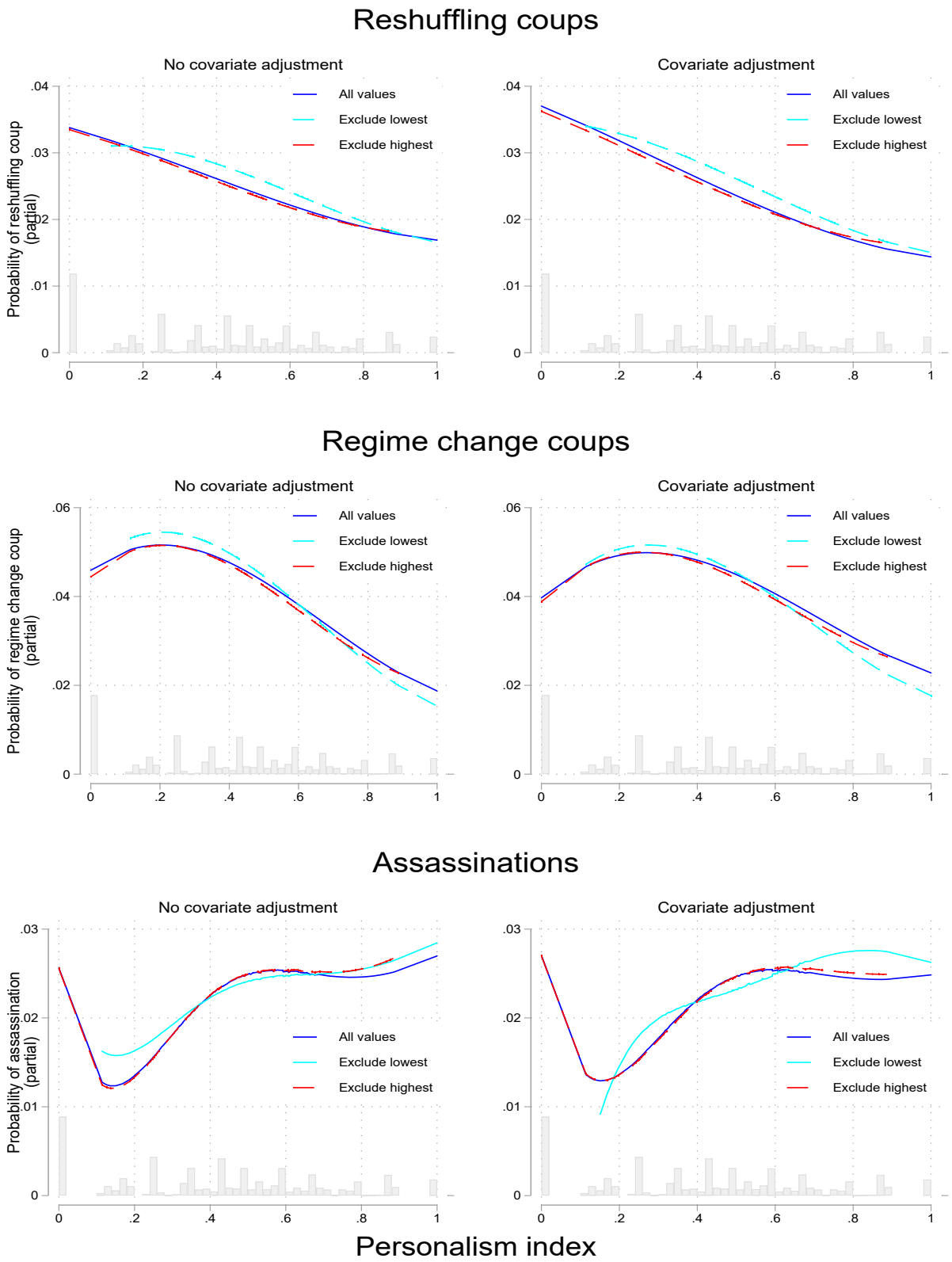

Figure 2: Personalism, Coups, and Assassinations

Parametric tests

The nonparametric fits presented in Figure 2 visually show the relationship between personalism and three technologies of rebellion. However, this approach only reports the fit at certain intervals along the scale and not *how well* the corresponding line actually fits the data; that is, this visualization approach does not provide a test statistic.

We therefore test parametric estimators that provide standard test statistics. While some researchers specify a non-linear functional form (such as a quadratic function), this approach imposes a particular functional form (and tests for deviations from this form) but, problematically, this can easily yield false positives (Lind and Mehlum 2010; Jones and Lupu 2018; Simonsohn 2018). We thus employ an interrupted regression approach to estimate two distinct linear relationships in the explanatory variable parameter space (Simonsohn 2018). U-shaped hypotheses are, in fact, expectations about whether the function relating two variables has a sign change that switches from a negative relationship at low (observed) values of a parameter to a positive relationship at higher values. The "two-lines" parametric test picks a value of the explanatory variable, x_c, to test whether the (conditional) relationship between x and the outcome in fact has a different sign when $x < x_c$ than when $x > x_c$. We thus transform the continuous explanatory variable into additional variables to estimate $x < x_c$ and $x > x_c$ as distinct parameters, and then pick a value of x_c that has sufficient statistical power (i.e. support in the distribution) to estimate both "lines" as efficiently as possible.[34] The two-lines approach yields two slope coefficients and two test statistics – one for each 'line.'

We implement two-lines parametric tests for modeling *regime change coups* and *assassinations* since the expectation for each is non-linear; for reshuffling coup attempts, we add the personalism scale linearly to a standard specification.[35] The results, shown

34. x_c is chosen to maximize both the difference in slope estimates (i.e. fit) and statistical power for both estimates, in particular the statistically weaker estimate (Simonsohn 2018, 546). By design, results are sensitive to the choice of x_c because we maximize statistical power. See Appendix D for details, including a discussion of potential false positives and choosing x_c.

35. The estimator is a two-way fixed effects linear probability model; standard errors are (two-way) clustered on 275 regime-cases and year.

in Figure 3, are for specifications without covariate adjustments; those with these adjustments are reported in Appendix C. The plots for *regime change coups* and *assassinations* show two lines, one (blue) for slope estimates where $x < x_c$ and another (red) for the estimate when $x > x_c$, each with a reported coefficient and p-value. These plots also indicate the p-value for the joint test that both slopes are statistically significant. For *reshuffling coups* we report a standard one-line slope and respective statistical test. All the plots also show the nonlinear fit with a dashed gray line for visual comparison.[36] The plots on the left show results for all values of personalism (i.e. x); the right column truncates this parameter space by omitting the highest values when estimating the slopes.

The two-line estimates in the top left plot show the results for *reshuffling coups*. The linear relationship between personalism and these coups is statistically significant at conventional levels and persists even when truncating the personalism variable.

The middle plots for *regime change coups* show lines that slope in opposite directions and that are statistically significant at conventional levels; the joint test is also significant. When personalism has low values (below about 0.4), the linear relationship between personalism and regime change coups is positive and the linear relationship between the two turns negative at high values of personalism. This test not only confirms the inverted U-shaped relationship shown in the semiparametric analysis but provides a statistical test that the slopes – with opposite signs – are both statistically different from zero. The middle right plot, which omits the highest values of personalism, yields a slightly more steep, negative slope. The joint test is again statistically significant.

The bottom set of plots report results for two-lines estimates for *assassinations*. The left plot shows there is a steep negative relationship between personalism and assassinations at the lowest levels of personalism (up to x_c=0.13) but given the decrease in sample size and statistical power when estimating a linear relationship across only a few values of the explanatory variable, the test is not significant at conventional levels ($p<0.154$). After 0.13, the linear relationship (shown in red) is positive but not statistically significant.

36. We transform linear predicted values from a linear model, which can have a negative sign, to rescale the values such that they are positive (inverse logit) and have the same means as observed outcomes.

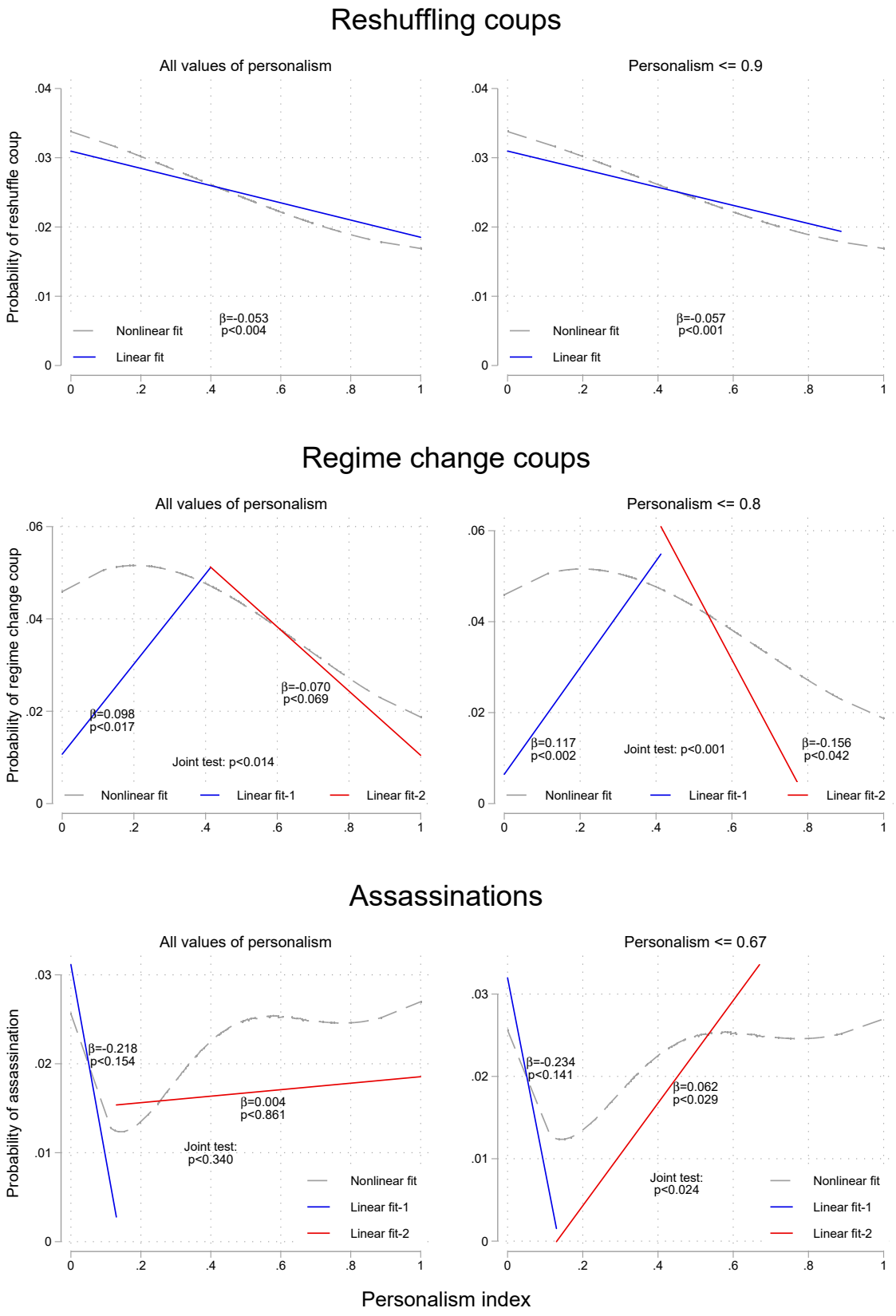

Figure 3: Parametric tests

This null result reflects the fact that when personalism reaches high levels (greater than 0.6), the relationship between personalism and assassinations, as shown in the nonlinear fit, is not monotonically increasing. The right plot shows the results when we exclude high values of personalism and conduct the two-lines test for personalism scores in the range from 0 to 0.67.[37] Again, there is a steep (but not significant) slope at low levels of personalism (in blue); but the estimate for middle levels of personalism (from 0.13 to 0.67) indicates a positive and statistically significant linear relationship.

In sum, the parametric estimates with a valid test for nonlinear relationships provide evidence consistent with the semiparametric analysis. The statistical tests for *regime change coups* (inverted U-shape, two-lines test) and *reshuffling coups* (negative, one-line test) meet conventional standards of statistical significance. For assassinations, however, the expected two-lines relationship is only present at low- to mid-levels of personalism (below 0.68); though the statistical test for very low levels does not quite meet conventional standards, at mid-levels of personalism (from 0.13 and 0.67) there is a statistically significant, positive relationship between personalism and assassinations.

Robustness Appendix E reports numerous robustness tests. We test whether the model specification alters the results: dropping or adding covariates to the specification does not appreciably alter the relationships shown in Figure 2.[38] We also show that the results for coups are robust to leaving out cases from any one geographic region. The pattern for assassinations, however, does *not* show an increasing relationship between personalism and assassination at high levels of personalism (the right-hand part of the U-shape) once we drop cases from the Middle East and North Africa. Next, we show that our preferred operationalization for assassinations – including ambiguous cases and excluding those that occur during coup attempts – is robust to other ways of measuring the concept: including assassinations that co-occur with coup attempts and excluding

37. 82 percent of sample observations remain when the personalism score is less than 0.68.

38. Additional potential confounders include: population size, urban population, legislative competition, elections, repression, time since coup/assassination, military spending and military personnel size.

ambiguous assassination attempts. The U-shape fit in the lower plots in Figure 2 remains roughly the same. Finally, in Appendix B, we discuss how 'hidden' assassination attempts might influence the results and show that when including coup plots to the analysis the expected relationship between personalism and assassinations grows stronger.

Conclusion

Existing work shows that power-sharing institutions generally improve the survival prospects of autocratic regimes by reducing elites' incentives to replace the leader. However, instead of institutionalizing power-sharing mechanisms, many dictators pursue an alternative strategy to strengthen their grip on power by personalizing their regimes. Through personalization, leaders curtail elites' policy and personnel influence and, as importantly, undermine their ability to coordinate action against the ruler. This paper shows that this process systematically alters the nature and type of the threats against the autocrat.

We find that personalization rapidly reduces the risk of reshuffling coups. This process, however, creates an incentive for newly sidelined elites and their allies in the security apparatus to attempt regime change coups. Personalization thus initially increases the risk of regime change coups, but this risk also falls if the leader further consolidates power and undermines their ability to coordinate. Finally, the risk of assassinations – the physical elimination of the dictator – starts relatively high, decreases as personalization grows, but increases again at high levels of personalism. Disgruntled elites and desperate opponents may find assassination as the only way out because this technology of rebellion requires fewer resources and less coordination than coups or uprisings. The paranoia with which dictators are often featured in journalistic depictions is not totally exaggerated. Threats to their positions (and lives) change, but do not fully disappear. Even after they seemingly accumulate enough power to be safe, they still must worry about being killed.

Our research speaks to a growing literature on the political consequences of political violence and unrest. Focusing on successful leader assassinations, Jones and Olken (2009) find that assassinations may further democracy, make ongoing conflicts more intense, but

hasten the end of high-intensity conflicts. Similarly, Bell (2019) finds that most repressive regimes are the most likely to experience political institutional shifts in the wake of terrorist assassinations. Alternatively, Iqbal and Zorn (2008) find that assassinations spur more instability – insurgencies, coups, and internationalized civil wars – in polities lacking institutionalized leadership selection. And while some suggest coups promote democratization (Thyne and Powell 2016), others note that coups are unlikely to further democracy (e.g. Derpanopoulos et al. 2016). Such divergent empirical patterns might be explained by a key feature of some dictatorships, namely the extent to which the leader holds power over elite supporters. Personalism has implications for ways in which regimes collapse and thus shapes the long-term political trajectory of countries ruled by dictatorships: these regimes are more likely to be overthrown by force and yet also the least likely to be replaced by subsequent democracies (Geddes et al. 2014). Our evidence helps shed light on these findings by showing how the extent of personalism influences the likelihood of coups and assassinations.

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Supplementary material for "Reshaping the Threat Environment: Personalism, Coups, and Assassinations"

Contents

1 Appendix A: Data

1.1 Summary statistics, data source, & sample cases

Table A-1: Summary statistics

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min.	Max.	N
Reshuffling coup attempt	0.026	0.158	0	1	4471
Regime change coup attempt	0.042	0.201	0	1	4471
Assassination	0.021	0.143	0	1	4471
Time since coup	12.925	12.569	0	63	4471
Time since assassination	17.643	13.704	0	64	4471
Leader time (log)	1.874	1.017	0	4.043	4471
Leader age	56.717	12.188	19	90	4471
Support party	0.736	0.441	0	1	4471
Military leader	0.35	0.477	0	1	4471
GDP pc (log)	0.714	1.136	-3.464	5.006	4471
Oil rents pc (log)	0.392	0.893	0	5.606	4471
Civil conflict	0.031	0.174	0	1	4471
Int'l conflict	0.028	0.164	0	1	4471
Personalism	0.428	0.276	0	1	4471
Year	1979.862	16.406	1946	2010	4471

Table A-2: Data sources

Variable	Source
Reshuffling coup attempt	See Appendix A-1.3
Regime change coup attempt	See Appendix A-1.3
Assassination	See Appendix A-1.2
Time since coup	Author calculation
Time since assassination	Author calculation
Leader time (log)	Geddes, Wright, and Frantz (2018)
Leader age	Geddes, Wright, and Frantz (2018)
Support party	Geddes, Wright, and Frantz (2018)
Military leader	Geddes, Wright, and Frantz (2018)
GDP pc (log)	Ethnic Power Relations 3.01
Oil rents pc (log)	Ethnic Power Relations 3.01
Civil conflict	UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset Version 4-2014
Int'l conflict	UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset Version 4-2014
Personalism	Geddes, Wright, and Frantz (2018)
Year	Geddes, Wright, and Frantz (2018)

Table A-3: List of sample regimes

Regime-case	*Begin*	*End*	*Regime-case*	*Begin*	*End*	*Regime-case*	*Begin*	*End*	*Regime-case*	*Begin*	*End*
Afghanistan 29-73	1947	1973	Congo-Brz 60-63	1961	1963	Ivory Coast 00-NA	2001	2010	Portugal 26-74	1946	1974
Afghanistan 73-78	1974	1978	Congo-Brz 63-68	1964	1968	Jordan 46-NA	1947	2010	Romania 45-89	1946	1989
Afghanistan 78-92	1979	1992	Congo-Brz 68-91	1969	1991	Kazakhstan 91-NA	1992	2010	Russia 93-NA	1994	2010
Afghanistan 96-01	1997	2001	Congo-Brz 97-NA	1998	2010	Kenya 63-02	1964	2002	Rwanda 62-73	1963	1973
Afghanistan 09-NA	2010	2010	Congo/Zaire 60-97	1961	1997	Korea North 48-NA	1950	2010	Rwanda 73-94	1974	1994
Albania 44-91	1946	1991	Congo/Zaire 97-NA	1998	2010	Korea South 48-60	1950	1960	Rwanda 94-NA	1995	2010
Algeria 62-92	1963	1992	Cuba 52-59	1953	1959	Korea South 61-87	1962	1987	Saudi Arabia 27-NA	1947	2010
Algeria 92-NA	1993	2010	Cuba 59-NA	1960	2010	Kuwait 61-NA	1962	2010	Senegal 60-00	1961	2000
Angola 75-NA	1976	2010	Czechoslovakia 48-89	1949	1989	Kyrgyzstan 91-05	1992	2005	Serbia/Yugoslavia 91-00	1992	2000
Argentina 43-46	1946	1946	Domincan Rep 30-62	1947	1962	Kyrgyzstan 05-10	2006	2010	Sierra Leone 67-68	1968	1968
Argentina 51-55	1952	1955	Dominican Rep 63-65	1964	1965	Laos 59-60	1960	1960	Sierra Leone 68-92	1969	1992
Argentina 55-58	1956	1958	Dominican Rep 66-78	1967	1978	Laos 60-62	1961	1962	Sierra Leone 92-96	1993	1996
Argentina 58-66	1959	1966	Ecuador 44-47	1947	1947	Laos 75-NA	1976	2010	Sierra Leone 97-98	1998	1998
Argentina 66-73	1967	1973	Ecuador 63-66	1964	1966	Lesotho 70-86	1971	1986	Somalia 69-91	1970	1991
Argentina 76-83	1977	1983	Ecuador 70-72	1971	1972	Lesotho 86-93	1987	1993	South Africa 10-94	1946	1994
Armenia 94-98	1995	1998	Ecuador 72-79	1973	1979	Liberia 44-80	1947	1980	South Vietnam 54-63	1955	1963
Armenia 98-NA	1999	2010	Egypt 22-52	1947	1952	Liberia 80-90	1981	1990	South Vietnam 63-75	1964	1975
Azerbaijan 91-92	1992	1992	Egypt 52-NA	1953	2010	Liberia 97-03	1998	2003	South Yemen 67-90	1968	1989
Azerbaijan 93-NA	1994	2010	El Salvador 31-48	1947	1948	Libya 51-69	1953	1969	Soviet Union 17-91	1946	1991
Bangladesh 71-75	1973	1975	El Salvador 48-82	1949	1982	Libya 69-NA	1970	2010	Spain 39-76	1946	1976
Bangladesh 75-82	1976	1982	El Salvador 82-94	1983	1994	Madagascar 60-72	1961	1972	Sri Lanka 78-94	1979	1994
Bangladesh 82-90	1983	1990	Eritrea 93-NA	1994	2010	Madagascar 72-75	1973	1975	Sudan 58-64	1959	1964
Bangladesh 07-08	2008	2008	Ethiopia 1889-1974	1947	1974	Madagascar 75-93	1976	1993	Sudan 69-85	1970	1985
Belarus 91-94	1992	1994	Ethiopia 74-91	1975	1991	Madagascar 09-	2010	2010	Sudan 85-86	1986	1986
Belarus 94-NA	1995	2010	Ethiopia 91-NA	1992	2010	Malawi 64-94	1965	1994	Sudan 89-NA	1990	2010
Benin 60-63	1961	1963	Gabon 60-NA	1961	2010	Malaysia 57-NA	1958	2010	Swaziland 68-NA	1969	2010
Benin 63-65	1964	1965	Gambia 65-94	1966	1994	Mali 60-68	1961	1968	Syria 46-47	1947	1947
Benin 65-67	1966	1967	Gambia 94-NA	1995	2010	Mali 68-91	1969	1991	Syria 49-51	1950	1951
Benin 67-69	1968	1969	Georgia 91-92	1992	1992	Mauritania 60-78	1961	1978	Syria 51-54	1952	1954
Benin 69-70	1970	1970	Georgia 92-03	1993	2003	Mauritania 78-05	1979	2005	Syria 57-58	1958	1958
Benin 72-90	1973	1990	Germany, East 49-90	1955	1989	Mauritania 05-07	2006	2007	Syria 62-63	1963	1963
Bolivia 46-51	1947	1951	Ghana 60-66	1961	1966	Mauritania 08-NA	2009	2010	Syria 63-NA	1964	2010
Bolivia 51-52	1952	1952	Ghana 66-69	1967	1969	Mexico 15-00	1946	2000	Taiwan 49-00	1950	2000
Bolivia 52-64	1953	1964	Ghana 72-79	1973	1979	Mongolia 21-93	1950	1993	Tajikistan 91-NA	1992	2010
Bolivia 64-69	1965	1969	Ghana 81-00	1982	2000	Morocco 56-NA	1957	2010	Tanzania 64-NA	1965	2010
Bolivia 69-71	1970	1971	Greece 67-74	1968	1974	Mozambique 75-NA	1976	2010	Thailand 44-47	1947	1947
Bolivia 71-79	1972	1979	Guatemala 54-58	1955	1958	Myanmar 58-60	1959	1960	Thailand 47-57	1948	1957
Bolivia 80-82	1981	1982	Guatemala 58-63	1959	1963	Myanmar 62-88	1963	1988	Thailand 57-73	1958	1973
Botswana 66-NA	1967	2010	Guatemala 63-66	1964	1966	Myanmar 88-NA	1989	2010	Thailand 76-88	1977	1988
Brazil 64-85	1965	1985	Guatemala 66-70	1967	1968	Namibia 1990-NA	1991	2010	Thailand 91-92	1992	1992
Bulgaria 44-90	1946	1990	Guatemala 70-85	1971	1985	Nepal 1846-1951	1947	1951	Thailand 06-07	2007	2007
Burkina Faso 60-66	1961	1966	Guatemala 85-95	1986	1993	Nepal 51-91	1952	1991	Togo 60-63	1961	1963
Burkina Faso 66-80	1967	1980	Guinea 58-84	1959	1984	Nepal 02-06	2003	2006	Togo 63-NA	1964	2010
Burkina Faso 80-82	1981	1982	Guinea 84-08	1985	2008	Nicaragua 36-79	1947	1979	Tunisia 56-NA	1957	2010
Burkina Faso 82-87	1983	1987	Guinea 08-10	2009	2010	Nicaragua 79-90	1980	1990	Turkey 23-50	1946	1950
Burkina Faso 87-NA	1988	2010	Guinea Bissau 74-80	1975	1980	Niger 60-74	1961	1974	Turkey 57-60	1958	1960
Burundi 1962-1966	1963	1966	Guinea Bissau 80-99	1981	1999	Niger 74-91	1975	1991	Turkey 60-61	1961	1961
Burundi 66-87	1967	1987	Guinea Bissau 02-03	2003	2003	Niger 96-99	1997	1999	Turkey 80-83	1981	1983
Burundi 87-93	1988	1993	Haiti 50-56	1951	1956	Nigeria 66-79	1967	1979	Turkmenistan 91-NA	1992	2010
Burundi 96-03	1997	2003	Haiti 57-86	1958	1986	Nigeria 83-93	1984	1993	UAE 71-NA	1972	2010
Cambodia 53-70	1955	1970	Haiti 86-88	1987	1988	Nigeria 93-99	1994	1999	Uganda 66-71	1967	1971
Cambodia 70-75	1971	1975	Haiti 88-90	1989	1990	Oman 1741-NA	1972	2010	Uganda 71-79	1972	1979
Cambodia 75-79	1976	1979	Haiti 91-94	1992	1994	Pakistan 47-58	1948	1958	Uganda 80-85	1981	1985
Cambodia 79-NA	1980	2010	Haiti 99-04	2000	2004	Pakistan 58-71	1959	1971	Uganda 86-NA	1987	2010
Cameroon 60-83	1961	1983	Honduras 33-56	1947	1956	Pakistan 75-77	1976	1977	Uruguay 73-84	1974	1979
Cameroon 83-NA	1984	2010	Honduras 63-71	1964	1971	Pakistan 77-88	1978	1988	Uzbekistan 91-NA	1992	2010
Cen African Rep 60-65	1961	1965	Honduras 72-81	1973	1981	Pakistan 99-08	2000	2008	Venezuela 48-58	1949	1958
Cen African Rep 66-79	1966	1979	Hungary 47-90	1948	1990	Panama 49-51	1950	1951	Venezuela 05-NA	2006	2010
Cen African Rep 79-81	1980	1981	Indonesia 49-66	1950	1966	Panama 53-55	1954	1955	Vietnam 54-NA	1955	2010
Cen African Rep 81-93	1982	1993	Indonesia 66-99	1967	1999	Panama 68-82	1969	1981	Yemen 18-62	1947	1962
Cen African Rep 03-NA	2004	2010	Iran 25-79	1947	1979	Panama 82-89	1983	1989	Yemen 62-67	1963	1967
Chad 60-75	1961	1975	Iran 79-NA	1980	2010	Paraguay 40-48	1947	1948	Yemen 67-74	1968	1974
Chad 75-79	1976	1979	Iraq 32-58	1947	1958	Paraguay 48-54	1949	1954	Yemen 74-78	1975	1978
Chad 82-90	1983	1990	Iraq 58-63	1959	1963	Paraguay 54-93	1955	1993	Yemen 78-NA	1979	2010
Chad 90-NA	1991	2010	Iraq 63-68	1964	1968	Peru 48-56	1949	1956	Yugoslavia 44-90	1946	1990
Chile 73-89	1974	1989	Iraq 68-79	1969	1979	Peru 68-80	1969	1980	Zambia 67-91	1968	1991
China 49-NA	1950	2010	Iraq 79-03	1980	2003	Peru 92-00	1993	2000	Zambia 96-NA	1997	2010
Colombia 49-53	1950	1953	Ivory Coast 60-99	1961	1999	Philippines 72-86	1973	1986	Zimbabwe 80-NA	1981	2010
Colombia 53-58	1954	1958	Ivory Coast 99-00	2000	2000	Poland 44-89	1946	1989			

1.2 Assassinations data

In our data, an *assassination attempt* occurs whenever perpetrators take concrete illegal actions to kill an incumbent regime leader. A *successful* assassination attempt results in the regime leader's death, whereas regime leaders survive following a *failed* assassination attempt. We do not consider *executions* of recently deposed regime leaders to be assassinations since such killings no longer target the incumbent. We do not place restrictions on the identity of would-be assassins, who may include regime insiders, members of the security forces, civilians, or foreign mercenaries. South Korean dictator Park Chung hee was assassinated by Kim Jae Kyu, the director of the Korean Central Intelligence Agency, while the two friends were having dinner together (Oberdorfer and Carlin 2013, 90-91). Ahmad al-Ghashmi, the president of North Yemen, was assassinated by a special envoy from South Yemen who was carrying a briefcase bomb (Brehony 2011, 97). Nicaraguan dictator Anastasio Somoza Garcia was assassinated by Rigoberto López Pérez, a Nicaraguan poet and leftist sympathizer (Walter 1993, 234).

Assassination may or may not be a tactic employed by coup makers. A *coup attempt* involves concrete illegal actions by civilian regime insiders (in a *non-military coup*) or current, active members of the security forces (in a *military* coup) to hold and seize power for themselves or their affiliates. An assassination attempt may occur during a coup attempt when the coup makers try to kill the regime leader *and* seize power at the same time. Even if the coup makers assassinate the regime leader, their coup may fail if they do not seize power, as was the case with the assassination of Dominican dictator Rafael Trujillo in May 1961. Coup leaders may succeed in both killing the regime leader and seizing power, as was the case in April 1980 when Samuel Doe and his affiliates killed William Tolbert during their coup in Sierra Leone. There are 34 cases in our data in which assassination and coup attempts co-occur. Of these cases, 27 occur during *regime change coup* attempts (12 successful, 15 failed) and 7 occur during *reshuffling coup* attempts (4 successful, 3 failed). Thus, regime change coup leaders are more likely to employ assassination as a tactic in their bid to seize power than reshuffling coup leaders.

We code an assassination attempt as *ambiguous* if contemporary observers or our historical sources have conflicting interpretations over whether perpetrators took concrete actions to kill the regime leader. We exclude some ambiguous events as assassination attempts when evidence is purely circumstantial. For example, some observers believe that Soviet dictator Josef Stalin was poisoned (Faria 2011, 2015), although the evidence is circumstantial and hotly debated to this day. Stalin's health had been failing for some time and, in the absence of a confession or other evidence (e.g. autopsy), we err with those in coding Stalin's death a natural one. The only successful assassination that we code as ambiguous is the plane crash that killed Samora Machel, the leader of Mozambique, in 1986. Although initial investigations blamed pilot error, subsequent evidence (including testimony at South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission in 1998) indicate that South African agents likely took concrete actions to cause the plane to crash (Douek 2017). The remaining cases of ambiguous evidence all pertain to failed assassinations. For example, two assassination attempts against Władysław Gomułka in July 1959 and December 1961 are ambiguous since the regime covered up the events and they were only officially revealed decades later (United Press International 1987).

Table A-4 compares our coding for all 210 candidate assassination events under autocratic regimes during the 1946 to 2010 period with alternative coverage and coding from over a half a dozen existing major datasets. The datasets we consulted include:

- major assassination datasets such as "IZ" (Iqbal and Zorn 2006, 2008), who code successful assassinations of heads of state from 1946 to 2000; or "JO" (Jones and Olken 2009), who code both successful and failed assassination attempts using the archives of major newspapers for the period 1875-2004;
- major leader datasets such as Archigos (Goemans, Gleditsch, and Chiozza 2009b) and Svolik (2012);
- major coup datasets such as "PT" Powell and Thyne (2011), "CSP" (Marshall and Marshall 2018), "CCD" (Nardulli et al. 2013), and the Colpus dataset; and

- event datasets such as the Historical "Phoenix" Event data (Althaus et al. 2019).

When the "# of Prior Sources" is listed as 0, this indicates that no prior dataset identified this event as an assassination attempt, but that we include this event in our data based on our review of the historical evidence. We code a total of 151 assassination attempts out of 210 candidate events identified below, of which 40 are newly identified cases included in no prior assassination dataset.

Table A-4: Comparison of Assassination Event Coverage with Other Major Datasets

ID	**Country**	**Our Coding**	**# Prior Sources**	**Other Datasets**
40-1957-3-13	Cuba	Assassination (F)	0	
40-1961-3-26	Cuba	plot	0	
40-1961-7-19	Cuba	plot	0	
40-1963-4-7	Cuba	plot	0	
40-1981-7-11	Cuba	plot	1	PT
41-1963-4-30	Haiti	plot	0	
41-1982-7-29	Haiti	prior defection	0	
41-1983-1-1	Haiti	Assassination (F)	0	
42-1961-5-30	Dominican Rep.	Assassination (S)	5	JO (S), IZ, Svolik, CSP, CCD
70-1952-6-25	Mexico	plot	1	JO (F)
90-1957-7-26	Guatemala	Assassination (S)	5	JO (S), IZ, Archigos, Svolik, CSP
90-1962-11-25	Guatemala	Assassination (F)	0	
91-1947-12-31	Honduras	Assassination (F)	1	JO (F)
92-1960-12-15	El Salvador	not regime leader	1	PT
93-1954-4-3	Nicaragua	plot	2	JO (F), PT
93-1956-9-29	Nicaragua	Assassination (S)	5	JO (S), IZ, Archigos, Svolik, CSP
93-1959-6-6	Nicaragua	Assassination (F)	1	JO (F)
95-1955-1-2	Panama	Assassination (S)	6	JO (S), IZ, Archigos, CSP, PT, Colpus
101-1950-11-13	Venezuela	Assassination (S)	5	JO (S), IZ, Svolik, PT, Colpus
135-1992-11-13	Peru	Assassination (F)	0	
145-1946-7-21	Bolivia	Assassination (S)	2	IZ, CCD
145-1946-9-27	Bolivia	Assassination (F)	1	JO (F)
145-1964-9-20	Bolivia	prior defection	1	JO (F)
145-1965-3-21	Bolivia	Assassination (F)	1	JO (F)
145-1971-4-15	Bolivia	plot	1	PT
155-1986-9-7	Chile	Assassination (F)	1	JO (F)
160-1955-6-16	Argentina	Assassination (F)	0	
160-1976-3-29	Argentina	not regime leader	1	JO (F)

Continued below

Table A-4: Master Dataset Crosswalk – continued from previous page

ID	Country	Our Coding	# Prior Sources	Other Datasets
160-1976-10-2	Argentina	Assassination (F)	1	JO (F)
160-1977-2-18	Argentina	Assassination (F)	1	JO (F)
230-1973-12-20	Spain	not regime leader	1	IZ
290-1959-7-15	Poland	Assassination (F)	0	
290-1961-12-3	Poland	Assassination (F)	0	
315-1954-1-22	Czechoslovakia	not regime leader	1	JO (F)
350-1968-8-13	Greece	Assassination (F)	1	JO (F)
365-1969-1-22	Russia	Assassination (F)	0	
365-1990-11-7	Russia	Assassination (F)	0	
371-1999-10-27	Armenia	not regime leader	3	IZ, PT
372-1995-8-29	Georgia	Assassination (F)	0	
372-1995-11-15	Georgia	not exist	1	JO (F)
372-1998-2-9	Georgia	Assassination (F)	1	JO (F)
420-1995-1-27	Gambia	plot	0	
433-1967-3-22	Senegal	Assassination (F)	1	JO (F)
434-1969-10-21	Benin	Assassination (F)	2	PT
434-1988-3-26	Benin	plot	0	
436-1965-4-13	Niger	Assassination (F)	1	JO (F)
436-1999-4-9	Niger	Assassination (S)	2	IZ, CCD
437-2000-9-18	Ivory Coast	Assassination (F)	1	JO (F)
438-1969-6-24	Guinea	Assassination (F)	0	
438-1980-5-14	Guinea	Assassination (F)	1	JO (F)
438-2005-1-19	Guinea	Assassination (F)	1	
438-2009-12-5	Guinea	Assassination (F)	1	Colpus
439-1987-10-15	Burkina Faso	Assassination (S)	2	CSP, CCD
450-1955-6-22	Liberia	Assassination (F)	3	JO (F), PT
450-1980-4-12	Liberia	Assassination (S)	2	IZ, CCD
450-1985-4-1	Liberia	Assassination (F)	1	
450-1990-9-9	Liberia	prior defection	2	IZ, CCD
451-1971-3-23	Sierra Leone	Assassination (F)	0	
452-1962-8-2	Ghana	Assassination (F)	1	
452-1962-9-9	Ghana	not regime leader	1	JO (F)
452-1963-1-9	Ghana	Assassination (F)	1	JO (F)
452-1963-8-15	Ghana	not exist	1	JO (F)
452-1964-1-2	Ghana	Assassination (F)	3	JO (F), PT
452-1979-6-4	Ghana	Reshuffle Coup (S)	1	CCD
452-1979-6-26	Ghana	not regime leader	1	IZ
461-1962-1-21	Togo	Assassination (F)	1	JO (F)
461-1963-1-13	Togo	Assassination (S)	3	JO (S), IZ, CCD
461-1967-4-25	Togo	Assassination (F)	1	JO (F)
461-1977-10-15	Togo	Assassination (F)	0	
461-1986-9-23	Togo	Assassination (F)	0	
461-1993-3-25	Togo	Assassination (F)	0	
461-1994-1-6	Togo	Assassination (F)	1	Phoenix
475-1966-7-29	Nigeria	Assassination (S)	2	IZ, CCD

Continued below

Table A-4: Master Dataset Crosswalk – continued from previous page

ID	Country	Our Coding	# Prior Sources	Other Datasets
475-1976-2-13	Nigeria	Assassination (S)	4	IZ, Svolik, CSP, CCD
482-1976-2-3	Cen. Afr. Rep.	Assassination (F)	1	PT
483-1975-4-13	Chad	Assassination (S)	2	IZ, CCD
483-1976-4-13	Chad	Assassination (F)	2	JO (F)
483-1989-4-1	Chad	plot	0	
484-1977-3-18	Congo	Assassination (S)	5	JO (S), IZ, Svolik, CSP, PT
484-1989-5-19	Congo	Assassination (F)	0	
490-1960-9-18	D.R. Congo	Assassination (F)	0	
490-1961-1-17	D.R. Congo	not regime leader	1	IZ
490-1963-11-19	D.R. Congo	Assassination (F)	0	
490-1966-5-30	D.R. Congo	plot	0	
490-2001-1-16	D.R. Congo	Assassination (S)	4	JO (S), CSP, PT, Colpus
500-1969-12-20	Uganda	Assassination (F)	1	JO (F)
500-1975-1-7	Uganda	not exist	1	JO (F)
500-1975-2-16	Uganda	Assassination (F)	2	PT
500-1976-6-10	Uganda	Assassination (F)	3	JO (F), PT
500-1977-6-18	Uganda	Assassination (F)	1	JO (F)
501-1972-8-11	Kenya	not exist	1	JO (F)
510-1972-4-7	Tanzania	not regime leader	2	IZ
516-1965-1-15	Burundi	not regime leader	2	IZ, PT
517-1973-7-5	Rwanda	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)	1	CCD
517-1994-4-6	Rwanda	Assassination (S)	4	JO (S), IZ, Svolik, CSP
530-1974-11-23	Ethiopia	not regime leader	2	IZ, CCD
530-1976-9-23	Ethiopia	Assassination (F)	0	
530-1977-2-3	Ethiopia	Assassination (S)	2	IZ, CCD
530-1978-1-12	Ethiopia	Assassination (F)	0	
530-1978-2-15	Ethiopia	not exist	1	JO (F)
531-2009-8-13	Eritrea	Assassination (F)	0	
541-1986-10-19	Mozambique	Assassination (S)	0	
552-1982-6-24	Zimbabwe	Assassination (F)	1	PT
560-1960-4-9	South Africa	Assassination (F)	1	JO (F)
560-1966-9-6	South Africa	Assassination (S)	5	JO (S), IZ, Archigos, Svolik, CSP
580-1975-2-11	Madagascar	Assassination (S)	5	JO (S), IZ, Svolik, CSP, PT
600-1971-7-10	Morocco	Assassination (F)	0	
600-1972-8-16	Morocco	Assassination (F)	0	
615-1968-4-25	Algeria	Assassination (F)	2	JO (F)
615-1992-6-29	Algeria	Assassination (S)	6	JO (S), IZ, Svolik, CSP, Phoenix, Colpus
615-1993-2-13	Algeria	Assassination (F)	0	
615-2007-9-6	Algeria	Assassination (F)	0	
620-1978-3-6	Libya	Assassination (F)	1	JO (F)
620-1981-12-19	Libya	plot	1	JO (F)
620-1984-5-8	Libya	Assassination (F)	1	JO (F)
620-1985-3-15	Libya	Assassination (F)	0	

Continued below

Table A-4: Master Dataset Crosswalk – continued from previous page

ID	Country	Our Coding	# Prior Sources	Other Datasets
620-1986-4-15	Libya	foreign	0	
620-1996-2-15	Libya	Assassination (F)	0	
620-1998-6-1	Libya	Assassination (F)	0	
625-1970-3-27	Sudan	Assassination (F)	1	JO (F)
630-1949-2-4	Iran	Assassination (F)	1	JO (F)
630-1951-3-7	Iran	not regime leader	1	IZ
630-1965-1-27	Iran	not regime leader	1	IZ
630-1965-4-10	Iran	Assassination (F)	0	
630-1967-6-3	Iran	Assassination (F)	1	JO (F)
630-1981-8-30	Iran	not regime leader	1	IZ
630-1982-4-8	Iran	plot	0	
640-1960-5-27	Turkey	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)	1	CCD
645-1958-7-14	Iraq	Assassination (S)	2	IZ, CCD
645-1959-10-7	Iraq	Assassination (F)	1	JO (F)
645-1963-2-8	Iraq	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)	1	IZ
645-1982-7-8	Iraq	Assassination (F)	1	JO (F)
645-1991-6-15	Iraq	Assassination (F)	0	
651-1948-12-28	Egypt	not regime leader	1	IZ
651-1954-10-26	Egypt	Assassination (F)	0	
651-1974-4-18	Egypt	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)	1	JO (F)
651-1981-10-6	Egypt	Assassination (S)	5	JO (S), IZ, Svolik, CSP, Phoenix
651-1995-6-26	Egypt	Assassination (F)	1	JO (F)
651-1999-9-6	Egypt	Assassination (F)	1	JO (F)
652-1949-8-14	Syria	Assassination (S)	2	IZ, CCD
652-1950-10-12	Syria	Assassination (F)	0	
652-1973-7-10	Syria	Assassination (F)	1	JO (F)
652-1973-8-30	Syria	not exist	1	PT
652-1980-6-26	Syria	Assassination (F)	1	JO (F)
663-1949-3-26	Jordan	Assassination (F)	1	JO (F)
663-1951-7-20	Jordan	Assassination (S)	4	JO (S), IZ, Archigos, Svolik
663-1958-7-1	Jordan	plot	0	
663-1960-8-29	Jordan	not regime leader	2	JO (F), IZ
663-1970-6-9	Jordan	Assassination (F)	1	JO (F)
663-1970-8-25	Jordan	not exist	1	JO (F)
663-1970-9-1	Jordan	Assassination (F)	1	JO (F)
663-1971-11-28	Jordan	not regime leader	1	IZ
663-1972-11-18	Jordan	not exist	1	JO (F)
670-1975-3-25	Saudi Arabia	Assassination (S)	5	JO (S), IZ, Archigos, Svolik, CSP
678-1948-2-17	North Yemen	Assassination (S)	1	CCD
678-1961-3-27	North Yemen	Assassination (F)	1	JO (F)
678-1968-7-6	North Yemen	Assassination (F)	1	JO (F)
678-1973-5-30	North Yemen	not regime leader	1	IZ
678-1977-10-11	North Yemen	Assassination (S)	7	JO (S), IZ, Svolik, CSP, CCD, PT, Colpus

Continued below

Table A-4: Master Dataset Crosswalk – continued from previous page

ID	Country	Our Coding	# Prior Sources	Other Datasets
678-1977-10-19	North Yemen	Assassination (F)	1	JO (F)
678-1978-6-24	North Yemen	Assassination (S)	5	JO (S), IZ, Archigos, Svolik, CSP
678-1978-10-12	North Yemen	Assassination (F)	0	
680-1978-6-26	South Yemen	Assassination (S)	2	IZ, CCD
690-1985-5-25	Kuwait	Assassination (F)	1	JO (F)
696-1972-1-25	United Arab Em.	not regime leader	1	IZ
698-1966-4-26	Oman	Assassination (F)	1	JO (F)
700-1978-4-27	Afghanistan	Assassination (S)	2	IZ, CCD
700-1979-10-8	Afghanistan	not regime leader	1	IZ
700-1979-12-27	Afghanistan	Assassination (S)	2	IZ, CCD
701-2002-11-25	Turkmenistan	Assassination (F)	1	JO (F)
702-1997-4-30	Tajikistan	Assassination (F)	0	
704-1999-2-16	Uzbekistan	Assassination (F)	1	JO (F)
710-1961-9-15	China	not exist	1	JO (F)
710-1971-9-13	China	plot	1	IZ
732-1952-6-25	South Korea	Assassination (F)	1	JO (F)
732-1968-1-21	South Korea	Assassination (F)	1	JO (F)
732-1974-8-15	South Korea	Assassination (F)	3	JO (F), PT, Phoenix
732-1979-10-26	South Korea	Assassination (S)	6	JO (S), IZ, Svolik, CSP, PT, Colpus
732-1983-10-9	South Korea	Assassination (F)	1	JO (F)
770-1951-10-16	Pakistan	Assassination (S)	4	JO (S), IZ, Archigos, Phoenix
770-1968-11-10	Pakistan	Assassination (F)	1	JO (F)
770-1988-8-17	Pakistan	not exist	1	JO (S)
770-2003-12-14	Pakistan	Assassination (F)	1	JO (F)
770-2003-12-25	Pakistan	Assassination (F)	1	JO (F)
771-1975-8-15	Bangladesh	Assassination (S)	2	IZ, CCD
771-1975-11-7	Bangladesh	Assassination (S)	1	CCD
771-1981-5-30	Bangladesh	Assassination (S)	4	IZ, Svolik, CSP, CCD
775-1963-10-26	Myanmar	not exist	1	JO (F)
775-1976-7-2	Myanmar	plot	0	
780-1987-8-18	Sri Lanka	Assassination (F)	1	JO (F)
780-1993-5-1	Sri Lanka	Assassination (S)	5	JO (S), IZ, CSP, Phoenix, Colpus
790-1962-1-23	Nepal	Assassination (F)	1	JO (F)
800-1946-6-9	Thailand	not regime leader	1	IZ
800-1982-7-16	Thailand	Assassination (F)	0	
800-1982-8-15	Thailand	Assassination (F)	0	
811-1959-8-31	Cambodia	Assassination (F)	1	JO (F)
811-1973-3-17	Cambodia	Assassination (F)	2	JO (F), PT
811-1973-11-19	Cambodia	Assassination (F)	1	JO (F)
811-1973-12-30	Cambodia	Assassination (F)	0	
811-1976-4-2	Cambodia	not regime leader	1	
811-1998-9-7	Cambodia	Assassination (F)	1	JO (F)
811-1998-9-24	Cambodia	Assassination (F)	1	JO (F)

Continued below

Table A-4: Master Dataset Crosswalk – continued from previous page

ID	Country	Our Coding	# Prior Sources	Other Datasets
817-1957-2-22	South Vietnam	Assassination (F)	1	JO (F)
817-1962-2-27	South Vietnam	Assassination (F)	2	JO (F)
817-1963-11-1	South Vietnam	Assassination (S)	1	IZ
817-1975-4-8	South Vietnam	Assassination (F)	1	JO (F)
850-1957-11-30	Indonesia	Assassination (F)	1	JO (F)
850-1960-3-09	Indonesia	Assassination (F)	0	
850-1962-1-8	Indonesia	Assassination (F)	1	JO (F)
850-1962-5-13	Indonesia	Assassination (F)	0	

Only 7 percent of coup attempts (28 of 388) under autocratic regimes over the 1946-2010 period have involved assassination attempts against the incumbent regime leader. Only about 20 percent of assassination attempts (28 of 136) over this period have occurred during coup attempts. Though assassination is a rare strategy of coup leaders, about two-thirds of assassination attempts during coup attempts (18 of 28) succeed in killing the regime leader. A successful assassination during a coup does not automatically entail the success of a coup, because the coup leaders may still fail to seize power for themselves. Table A-5 lists the 28 cases of co-occurring assassination and coup attempts.

Table A-5: Assassination Attempts during Coup Attempts in Aut. Regimes, 1946–2010

Regime	*Leader*	*Date*	*Leader Killed?*
Afghanistan 73-78	Daoud Khan, Mohammed	April 27, 1978	Yes
Argentina 51-55	Perón, Juan Domingo	June 16, 1955	No
Bangladesh 71-75	Mujib, Sheikh	August 15, 1975	Yes
Bangladesh 75-82	Rahman, Ziaur	May 30, 1981	Yes
Burkina Faso 82-87	Sankara, Thomas	October 15, 1987	Yes
Cen African Rep 66-79	Bokassa, Jean-Bédel	February 3, 1976	No
Chad 60-75	Tombalbaye, François	April 13, 1975	Yes
Congo-Brz 68-91	Ngouabi, Marien	March 18, 1977	Yes
Congo/Zaire 60-97	Mobutu, Joseph-Désiré	November 19, 1963	No
Dominican Rep 30-62	Trujillo, Rafael	May 30, 1961	Yes
Egypt 52-11	Sadat, Anwar	October 6, 1981	Yes
Ethiopia 74-91	Teferri Bente	February 3, 1977	Yes
Iraq 32-58	Abd al-Ilah	July 14, 1958	Yes
Iraq 58-63	Qasim, Abd al-Karim	October 7, 1959	No

Continued on next page

Table A-5: Assassination attempts during coup attempts – continued from previous page

Regime	*Leader*	*Date*	*Leader Killed?*
Ivory Coast 99-00	Guéï, Robert	September 18, 2000	No
Liberia 44-80	Tolbert, William	April 12, 1980	Yes
Morocco 56-NA	Hassan II	July 10, 1971	No
Morocco 56-NA	Hassan II	August 16, 1972	No
Niger 96-99	Maïnassara, Ibrahim Baré	April 9, 1999	Yes
Nigeria 66-79	Mohammed, Murtala	February 13, 1976	Yes
Rwanda 73-94	Habyarimana, Juvénal	April 6, 1994	Yes
Sierra Leone 68-92	Stevens, Siaka	March 23, 1971	No
Togo 60-63	Olympio, Sylvanus	January 13, 1963	Yes
Uganda 71-79	Amin, Idi	June 18, 1977	No
Vietnam South 54-63	Diem, Ngo Dinh	November 1, 1963	Yes
Yemen 18-62	Yahya Muhammad Hamid ed-Din	February 17, 1948	Yes
Yemen South 67-90	Rubay Ali, Salim	June 26, 1978	Yes
Zimbabwe 80-NA	Mugabe, Robert	June 24, 1982	No

Nearly 80 percent of assassination attempts (108 of 136) of autocratic leaders in our sample over the 1946-2010 period did not occur during a coup attempt. Assassination attempts are far less likely to succeed when they do not occur during coup attempts, with only about 14 percent of such assassinations killing the regime leader. Table A-6 lists the "stand-alone" cases of assassination attempts.

Table A-6: Leader Assassination Attempts in Autocratic Regimes outside of Coup Attempts, 1946–2010

Regime	*Leader*	*Date*	*Leader Killed?*
Algeria 62-92	Boumédiène, Houari	April 25, 1968	No
Algeria 92-NA	Nezzar, Khaled	February 13, 1993	No
Algeria 92-NA	Bouteflika	September 6, 2007	No
Argentina 76-83	Videla, Jorge Rafael	February 18, 1977	No
Bolivia 43-46	Villarroel, Gualberto	July 21, 1946	Yes
Bolivia 64-69	Barrientos, René	March 21, 1965	No
Cambodia 53-70	Sihanouk, Norodom	August 31, 1959	No
Cambodia 70-75	Lon Nol	March 17, 1973	No
Cambodia 70-75	Lon Nol	November 19, 1973	No
Cambodia 70-75	Lon Nol	December 30, 1973	No
Cambodia 79-NA	Hun Sen	September 7, 1998	No
Cambodia 79-NA	Hun Sen	September 24, 1998	No
Chad 75-79	Malloum, Félix	April 13, 1976	No

Continued on next page

Table A-6: Assassination attempts NOT during coup attempts – continued from previous page

Regime	*Leader*	*Date*	*Leader Killed?*
Chile 73-89	Pinochet, Augusto	September 7, 1986	No
Congo-Brz 68-91	Sassou-Nguesso	May 19, 1989	No
Congo/Zaire 97-NA	Kabila, Laurent	January 16, 2001	Yes
Cuba 52-59	Batista, Fulgencio	March 13, 1957	No
Egypt 52-11	Mubarak, Hosni	June 26, 1995	No
Egypt 52-11	Mubarak, Hosni	September 6, 1999	No
Eritrea 93-NA	Afwerki, Isaias	August 13, 2009	No
Ethiopia 74-91	Mengistu, Haile Mariam	September 23, 1976	No
Ethiopia 74-91	Mengistu, Haile Mariam	January 12, 1978	No
Georgia 92-03	Shevardnadze, Eduard	August 29, 1995	No
Georgia 92-03	Shevardnadze, Eduard	February 9, 1998	No
Ghana 60-66	Nkrumah, Kwame	August 2, 1962	No
Ghana 60-66	Nkrumah, Kwame	January 9, 1963	No
Ghana 60-66	Nkrumah, Kwame	January 2, 1964	No
Greece 67-74	Papadopoulos, Georgios	August 13, 1968	No
Guatemala 54-58	Castillo Armas, Carlos	July 26, 1957	Yes
Guinea 08-10	Camara, Moussa Dadis	December 5, 2009	No
Guinea 58-84	Touré, Ahmed Sékou	June 24, 1969	No
Guinea 58-84	Touré, Ahmed Sékou	May 14, 1980	No
Guinea 84-08	Conté, Lansana	January 19, 2005	No
Haiti 57-86	Duvalier, Jean-Claude	January 1, 1983	No
Honduras 33-56	Carias	December 31, 1947	No
Indonesia 49-66	Sukarno	November 30, 1957	No
Indonesia 49-66	Sukarno	March 9, 1960	No
Indonesia 49-66	Sukarno	January 8, 1962	No
Indonesia 49-66	Sukarno	May 13, 1962	No
Iran 25-79	Pahlavi, Mohammad Reza	February 4, 1949	No
Iran 25-79	Pahlavi, Mohammad Reza	April 10, 1965	No
Iran 25-79	Pahlavi, Mohammad Reza	June 3, 1967	No
Iraq 79-03	Hussein, Saddam	July 8, 1982	No
Iraq 79-03	Hussein, Saddam	June 15, 1991	No
Jordan 46-NA	Abdullah	March 26, 1949	No
Jordan 46-NA	Abdullah	July 20, 1951	Yes
Jordan 46-NA	Hussein	June 9, 1970	No
Jordan 46-NA	Hussein	September 1, 1970	No
Korea South 48-60	Rhee, Syngman	June 25, 1952	No
Korea South 61-87	Park, Chung-hee	January 21, 1968	No
Korea South 61-87	Park, Chung-hee	August 15, 1974	No
Korea South 61-87	Park, Chung-hee	October 26, 1979	Yes
Korea South 61-87	Chun, Doo-hwan	October 9, 1983	No
Kuwait 61-NA	Jabir al Ahmad	May 25, 1985	No
Liberia 44-80	Tubman, William	June 22, 1955	No
Liberia 80-90	Doe, Samuel	April 1, 1985	No
Libya 69-11	Gaddafi, Muammar	March 6, 1978	No
Libya 69-11	Gaddafi, Muammar	May 8, 1984	No
Libya 69-11	Gaddafi, Muammar	March 15, 1985	No

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Table A-6: Assassination attempts NOT during coup attempts – continued from previous page

Regime	*Leader*	*Date*	*Leader Killed?*
Libya 69-11	Gaddafi, Muammar	February 15, 1996	No
Libya 69-11	Gaddafi, Muammar	June 1, 1998	No
Mozambique 75-NA	Machel, Samora	October 19, 1986	Yes
Nepal 51-91	Mahendra	January 23, 1962	No
Nicaragua 36-79	Somoza Garcia, Anastasio	September 29, 1956	Yes
Nicaragua 36-79	Somoza Debay, Luis	June 6, 1959	No
Niger 60-74	Diori, Hamani	April 13, 1965	No
Oman 41-NA	Said ibn Taimur	April 26, 1966	No
Pakistan 47-58	Liaquat Ali Khan	October 16, 1951	Yes
Pakistan 58-71	Khan, Ayub	November 10, 1968	No
Pakistan 99-08	Musharraf, Pervez	December 14, 2003	No
Pakistan 99-08	Musharraf, Pervez	December 25, 2003	No
Panama 53-55	Remón, José Antonio	January 2, 1955	Yes
Poland 44-89	Gomułka, Władysław	July 15, 1959	No
Poland 44-89	Gomułka, Władysław	December 3, 1961	No
Saudi Arabia 27-NA	Faisal bin Abdulaziz	March 25, 1975	Yes
Senegal 60-00	Senghor, Léopold Sédar	March 22, 1967	No
South Africa 10-94	Verwoerd	April 9, 1960	No
South Africa 10-94	Verwoerd	September 6, 1966	Yes
Soviet Union 17-91	Brezhnev, Leonid	January 22, 1969	No
Soviet Union 17-91	Gorbachev, Mikhail	November 7, 1990	No
Sri Lanka 78-94	Jayewardene	August 18, 1987	No
Sri Lanka 78-94	Premadasa	May 1, 1993	Yes
Sudan 69-85	Numeiri, Jaafar	March 27, 1970	No
Syria 49-51	Shishakli, Adib	October 12, 1950	No
Syria 63-NA	Asad, Hafez al-	July 10, 1973	No
Syria 63-NA	Asad, Hafez al-	June 26, 1980	No
Tajikistan 91-NA	Rahmon, Emomali	April 30, 1997	No
Thailand 76-88	Prem Tinsulanonda	July 16, 1982	No
Thailand 76-88	Prem Tinsulanonda	August 15, 1982	No
Togo 60-63	Olympio, Sylvanus	January 21, 1962	No
Togo 63-NA	Eyadéma, Gnassingbé	April 25, 1967	No
Togo 63-NA	Eyadéma, Gnassingbé	October 15, 1977	No
Togo 63-NA	Eyadéma, Gnassingbé	September 23, 1986	No
Togo 63-NA	Eyadéma, Gnassingbé	March 25, 1993	No
Togo 63-NA	Eyadéma, Gnassingbé	January 6, 1994	No
Turkmenistan 91-NA	Niyazov	November 25, 2002	No
Uganda 66-71	Obote, Milton	December 20, 1969	No
Uganda 71-79	Amin, Idi	February 16, 1975	No
Uganda 71-79	Amin, Idi	June 10, 1976	No
Uzbekistan 91-NA	Karimov	February 16, 1999	No
Venezuela 48-58	Delgado Chalbaud, Carlos	November 13, 1950	Yes
Vietnam South 54-63	Diem, Ngo Dinh	February 22, 1957	No
Vietnam South 54-63	Diem, Ngo Dinh	February 27, 1962	No
Vietnam South 63-75	Thieu	April 8, 1975	No
Yemen 18-62	Ahmad bin Yahya	March 27, 1961	No

Continued on next page

Table A-6: Assassination attempts NOT during coup attempts – continued from previous page

Regime	*Leader*	*Date*	*Leader Killed?*
Yemen 67-74	Iryani, Abdul Rahman al-	July 6, 1968	No
Yemen 74-78	Hamdi, Ibrahim al-	October 11, 1977	Yes
Yemen 74-78	Ghashmi, Ahmad al-	June 24, 1978	Yes

1.3 Coup data

Table A-7 shows the list of coups included in the analyses. For reshuffling coups, directed at replacing a particular leader, we only include those coups where the incumbent leader in Chin, Wright, and Carter (2021) matches the leader in Geddes et al. (2018), which identifies the de facto leader of a given regime on January 1 of the observation year. However, we do not consider reshuffling coups against subsequent leaders that may have occurred in the same country-year. For regime change coups, we include coup attempts where the incumbent leader in Chin, Wright, and Carter (2021) matches the leader in Geddes et al. (2018) as well as those cases where the incumbent leader is not the January 1st leader but the coup is directed against a successor within the same regime case in Geddes et al. (2014). However, we do not consider regime change coups against short-lived regimes that never ruled as of January 1 of the country-year.

Table A-7: Regime Change and Reshuffling Coups in Autocratic Regimes, 1946–2010

ID	Country	Leader	Coup Type
700-1953-9-7	Afghanistan	Mahmud Khan, Shah	Reshuffle Coup (S)
700-1973-7-17	Afghanistan	Zahir Shah, Mohammed	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
700-1978-4-27	Afghanistan	Daoud Khan, Mohammed	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
700-1979-9-16	Afghanistan	Taraki, Nur Muhammad	Reshuffle Coup (S)
700-1990-3-6	Afghanistan	Najibullah, Mohammad	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
615-1963-9-29	Algeria	Ben Bella, Ahmed	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
615-1965-6-19	Algeria	Ben Bella, Ahmed	Reshuffle Coup (S)
615-1967-12-14	Algeria	Boumédiène, Houari	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
615-1992-1-11	Algeria	Benjedid, Chadli	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
540-1977-5-27	Angola	Neto, Agostinho	Reshuffle Coup (F)
160-1955-6-16	Argentina	Perón, Juan Domingo	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
160-1955-9-20	Argentina	Perón, Juan Domingo	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
160-1956-6-9	Argentina	Aramburu, Pedro Eugenio	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
160-1959-9-4	Argentina	Anaya, Elbio Carlos	Reshuffle Coup (S)
160-1960-6-13	Argentina	Toranzo Montero, Carlos Severo	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
160-1960-11-30	Argentina	Toranzo Montero, Carlos Severo	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
160-1961-8-11	Argentina	Poggi, Raúl Alejandro	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
160-1970-6-8	Argentina	Ongania, Juan Carlos	Reshuffle Coup (S)
160-1971-3-22	Argentina	Levingston, Roberto M.	Reshuffle Coup (S)
160-1982-6-17	Argentina	Galtieri, Leopoldo	Reshuffle Coup (S)
371-1998-2-3	Armenia	Ter-Petrosyan, Levon	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)

Continued below

Table A-7: Master Coup List – continued from previous page

ID	Country	Leader	Coup Type
373-1992-5-15	Azerbaijan	Mutalibov, Ayaz	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
373-1994-10-4	Azerbaijan	Aliyev, Heydar	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
373-1995-3-13	Azerbaijan	Aliyev, Heydar	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
771-1975-8-15	Bangladesh	Mujib, Sheikh	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
771-1977-10-2	Bangladesh	Rahman, Ziaur	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
771-1981-5-30	Bangladesh	Rahman, Ziaur	Reshuffle Coup (F)
771-1982-3-24	Bangladesh	Sattar, Abdus	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
434-1963-10-28	Benin	Maga, Hubert	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
434-1965-11-29	Benin	Apithy, Sourou-Migan	Reshuffle Coup (S)
434-1965-12-22	Benin	Congacou, Tahirou	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
434-1967-12-17	Benin	Soglo, Christophe	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
434-1969-7-12	Benin	Zinsou, Émile Derlin	Reshuffle Coup (F)
434-1969-12-13	Benin	Kouandété, Maurice	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
434-1975-1-21	Benin	Kérékou, Mathieu	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
145-1946-6-13	Bolivia	Villarroel, Gualberto	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
145-1949-8-27	Bolivia	Urriolagoitía Harriague, Mamerto	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
145-1950-7-22	Bolivia	Urriolagoitía Harriague, Mamerto	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
145-1951-5-16	Bolivia	Urriolagoitía Harriague, Mamerto	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
145-1952-4-11	Bolivia	Ballivián Rojas, Hugo	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
145-1953-1-6	Bolivia	Paz Estenssoro, Víctor	Reshuffle Coup (F)
145-1953-11-9	Bolivia	Paz Estenssoro, Víctor	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
145-1958-5-14	Bolivia	Siles Zuazo, Hernán	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
145-1958-10-21	Bolivia	Siles Zuazo, Hernán	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
145-1960-3-19	Bolivia	Siles Zuazo, Hernán	Reshuffle Coup (F)
145-1964-11-4	Bolivia	Paz Estenssoro, Víctor	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
145-1968-8-21	Bolivia	Barrientos, René	Reshuffle Coup (F)
145-1969-9-26	Bolivia	Siles Salinas, Luis Adolfo	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
145-1970-10-5	Bolivia	Ovando Candía, Alfredo	Reshuffle Coup (F)
145-1970-10-6	Bolivia	Ovando Candía, Alfredo	Reshuffle Coup (S)
145-1971-1-10	Bolivia	Torres, Juan José	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
145-1971-8-22	Bolivia	Torres, Juan José	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
145-1974-6-5	Bolivia	Banzer, Hugo	Reshuffle Coup (F)
145-1974-11-7	Bolivia	Banzer, Hugo	Reshuffle Coup (F)
145-1978-7-21	Bolivia	Banzer, Hugo	Reshuffle Coup (S)
145-1981-5-11	Bolivia	García Meza, Luis	Reshuffle Coup (F)
145-1981-5-25	Bolivia	García Meza, Luis	Reshuffle Coup (F)
145-1981-6-27	Bolivia	García Meza, Luis	Reshuffle Coup (F)
145-1981-8-4	Bolivia	García Meza, Luis	Reshuffle Coup (S)
140-1969-8-31	Brazil	Costa e Silva, Artur da	Reshuffle Coup (S)
355-1989-11-10	Bulgaria	Zhivkov, Todor	Non-mil. Coup (S)
439-1966-1-3	Burkina Faso	Yaméogo, Maurice	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
439-1980-11-25	Burkina Faso	Lamizana, Sangoulé	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
439-1982-11-7	Burkina Faso	Zerbo, Saye	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
439-1983-5-17	Burkina Faso	Sankara, Thomas	Reshuffle Coup (S)
439-1987-10-15	Burkina Faso	Sankara, Thomas	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
516-1965-10-18	Burundi	Mwambutsa IV	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)

Continued below

Table A-7: Master Coup List – continued from previous page

ID	Country	Leader	Coup Type
516-1966-7-8	Burundi	Mwambutsa IV	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
516-1976-11-1	Burundi	Micombero, Michel	Reshuffle Coup (S)
516-1987-9-3	Burundi	Bagaza, Jean-Baptiste	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
516-1992-3-4	Burundi	Buyoya, Pierre	Reshuffle Coup (F)
516-1993-7-3	Burundi	Buyoya, Pierre	Reshuffle Coup (F)
516-2001-4-18	Burundi	Buyoya, Pierre	Reshuffle Coup (F)
516-2001-7-22	Burundi	Buyoya, Pierre	Reshuffle Coup (F)
811-1970-3-18	Cambodia	Sihanouk, Norodom	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
811-1978-5-15	Cambodia	Pol Pot	Reshuffle Coup (F)
811-1994-7-2	Cambodia	Hun Sen	Reshuffle Coup (F)
811-1997-7-6	Cambodia	Hun Sen	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
471-1984-4-6	Cameroon	Biya, Paul	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
482-1966-1-1	Cen. Afr. Rep.	Dacko, David	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
482-1976-2-3	Cen. Afr. Rep.	Bokassa, Jean-Bédel	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
482-1981-9-1	Cen. Afr. Rep.	Dacko, David	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
482-1982-3-3	Cen. Afr. Rep.	Kolingba, André	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
483-1975-4-13	Chad	Tombalbaye, François	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
483-1977-4-1	Chad	Malloum, Félix	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
483-1979-2-12	Chad	Malloum, Félix	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
483-1991-10-13	Chad	Déby, Idriss	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
483-1992-2-21	Chad	Déby, Idriss	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
483-2004-5-16	Chad	Déby, Idriss	Reshuffle Coup (F)
483-2006-4-13	Chad	Déby, Idriss	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
100-1953-6-13	Colombia	Gómez, Laureano	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
100-1957-5-10	Colombia	Rojas Pinilla, Gustavo	Reshuffle Coup (S)
100-1958-5-2	Colombia	París Gordillo, Gabriel	Reshuffle Coup (F)
484-1963-8-15	Congo	Youlou, Fulbert	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
484-1966-6-27	Congo	Massemba-Débat, Alphonse	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
484-1968-8-3	Congo	Massemba-Débat, Alphonse	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
484-1968-9-4	Congo	Massemba-Débat, Alphonse	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
484-1970-3-22	Congo	Ngouabi, Marien	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
484-1972-2-22	Congo	Ngouabi, Marien	Reshuffle Coup (F)
484-1977-3-18	Congo	Ngouabi, Marien	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
484-1979-2-5	Congo	Yhombi-Opango/Sassou-Nguesso	Non-mil. Coup (S)
94-1949-4-2	Costa Rica	Figueres Ferrer, José	Reshuffle Coup (F)
40-1957-9-5	Cuba	Batista, Fulgencio	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
315-1968-1-5	Czechoslovakia	Novotný, Antonín	Non-mil. Coup (S)
490-1963-11-19	D.R. Congo	Mobutu, Joseph-Désiré	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
490-1967-7-5	D.R. Congo	Mobutu, Joseph-Désiré	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
490-1992-1-22	D.R. Congo	Mobutu, Joseph-Désiré	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
490-2004-3-28	D.R. Congo	Kabila, Joseph	Reshuffle Coup (F)
490-2004-6-11	D.R. Congo	Kabila, Joseph	Reshuffle Coup (F)
42-1961-5-30	Dominican Rep.	Trujillo, Rafael	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
42-1962-1-16	Dominican Rep.	Balaguer, Joaquín	Reshuffle Coup (F)
42-1962-1-18	Dominican Rep.	Echavarría, Rodríguez	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
42-1965-4-25	Dominican Rep.	Wessin y Wessin, Elías	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)

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Table A-7: Master Coup List – continued from previous page

ID	Country	Leader	Coup Type
265-1971-5-3	East Germany	Ulbricht, Walter	Reshuffle Coup (S)
265-1989-10-18	East Germany	Honecker, Erich	Non-mil. Coup (S)
130-1947-8-23	Ecuador	Velasco Ibarra, José María	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
130-1966-3-29	Ecuador	Castro Jijón, Ramón	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
130-1972-2-15	Ecuador	Velasco Ibarra, José María	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
130-1975-9-1	Ecuador	Rodríguez Lara, Guillermo	Reshuffle Coup (F)
130-1976-1-11	Ecuador	Rodríguez Lara, Guillermo	Reshuffle Coup (S)
651-1952-7-23	Egypt	Farouk	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
651-1954-2-25	Egypt	Naguib, Mohamed	Reshuffle Coup (F)
651-1967-6-9	Egypt	Nasser, Gamal Abdel	Reshuffle Coup (F)
651-1974-4-18	Egypt	Sadat, Anwar	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
651-1981-10-6	Egypt	Sadat, Anwar	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
92-1948-12-14	El Salvador	Castaneda Castro, Salvador	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
92-1960-10-26	El Salvador	Lemus, José María	Reshuffle Coup (S)
92-1961-1-25	El Salvador	Yanes Urías, César	Reshuffle Coup (S)
92-1972-3-25	El Salvador	Sánchez Hernández, Fidel	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
92-1979-10-15	El Salvador	Romero, Carlos Humberto	Reshuffle Coup (S)
92-1980-5-10	El Salvador	Majano Ramos, Adolfo Arnaldo	Reshuffle Coup (S)
530-1960-12-14	Ethiopia	Haile Selassie I	Reshuffle Coup (F)
530-1974-9-12	Ethiopia	Haile Selassie I	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
530-1977-2-3	Ethiopia	Teferri Bente	Reshuffle Coup (S)
530-1989-5-16	Ethiopia	Mengistu, Haile Mariam	Reshuffle Coup (F)
481-1964-2-17	Gabon	M'Ba, Léon	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
420-1981-7-30	Gambia	Jawara, Dawda	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
420-1994-7-22	Gambia	Jawara, Dawda	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
452-1966-2-24	Ghana	Nkrumah, Kwame	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
452-1967-4-17	Ghana	Ankrah, Joseph Arthur	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
452-1969-4-2	Ghana	Ankrah, Joseph Arthur	Reshuffle Coup (S)
452-1978-7-5	Ghana	Acheampong, Ignatius Kutu	Reshuffle Coup (S)
452-1979-5-15	Ghana	Akuffo, Fred	Reshuffle Coup (F)
452-1979-6-4	Ghana	Akuffo, Fred	Reshuffle Coup (S)
452-1982-10-28	Ghana	Rawlings, Jerry	Non-mil. Coup (F)
452-1982-11-23	Ghana	Rawlings, Jerry	Reshuffle Coup (F)
350-1967-12-13	Greece	Papadopoulos, Georgios	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
350-1973-11-25	Greece	Papadopoulos, Georgios	Reshuffle Coup (S)
90-1954-8-2	Guatemala	Castillo Armas, Carlos	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
90-1955-1-20	Guatemala	Castillo Armas, Carlos	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
90-1960-7-18	Guatemala	Ydígoras Fuentes, Miguel	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
90-1960-11-13	Guatemala	Ydígoras Fuentes, Miguel	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
90-1962-11-25	Guatemala	Ydígoras Fuentes, Miguel	Reshuffle Coup (F)
90-1963-3-30	Guatemala	Ydígoras Fuentes, Miguel	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
90-1982-3-23	Guatemala	Lucas García, Fernando Romeo	Reshuffle Coup (S)
90-1983-6-27	Guatemala	Ríos Montt, José Efraín	Reshuffle Coup (F)
90-1983-8-8	Guatemala	Ríos Montt, José Efraín	Reshuffle Coup (S)
90-1988-5-11	Guatemala	Gramajo Morales, Héctor	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
438-1984-4-3	Guinea	Beavogui, Louis Lansana	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)

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Table A-7: Master Coup List – continued from previous page

ID	Country	Leader	Coup Type
438-1985-7-4	Guinea	Conté, Lansana	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
438-1996-2-3	Guinea	Conté, Lansana	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
438-2008-12-23	Guinea	Somparé, Aboubacar	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
404-1980-11-14	Guinea-Bissau	Cabral, Luís	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
404-1998-6-7	Guinea-Bissau	Vieira, João Bernardo	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
404-2003-9-14	Guinea-Bissau	Yalá, Kumba	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
41-1946-1-11	Haiti	Lescot, Élie	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
41-1970-4-24	Haiti	Duvalier, François	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
41-1986-2-7	Haiti	Duvalier, Jean-Claude	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
41-1988-6-17	Haiti	Namphy, Henri	Reshuffle Coup (F)
41-1988-9-17	Haiti	Namphy, Henri	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
41-1989-4-2	Haiti	Avril, Prosper	Reshuffle Coup (F)
41-1989-4-5	Haiti	Avril, Prosper	Reshuffle Coup (F)
41-1990-3-10	Haiti	Avril, Prosper	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
91-1956-8-1	Honduras	Lozano Díaz, Julio	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
91-1956-10-21	Honduras	Lozano Díaz, Julio	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
91-1975-4-22	Honduras	López Arellano, Oswaldo	Reshuffle Coup (S)
91-1978-8-7	Honduras	Melgar Castro, Juan Alberto	Reshuffle Coup (S)
310-1956-7-18	Hungary	Rákosi, Mátyás	Non-mil. Coup (S)
310-1956-10-30	Hungary	Kádár, János	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
310-1988-5-22	Hungary	Kádár, János	Non-mil. Coup (S)
850-1958-2-15	Indonesia	Sukarno	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
850-1965-10-1	Indonesia	Sukarno	Reshuffle Coup (F)
850-1966-3-12	Indonesia	Sukarno	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
630-1953-8-16	Iran	Pahlavi, Mohammad Reza	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
630-1980-7-9	Iran	Khomeini, Ruhollah	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
645-1958-7-14	Iraq	Abd al-Ilah	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
645-1959-3-7	Iraq	Qasim, Abd al-Karim	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
645-1959-10-7	Iraq	Qasim, Abd al-Karim	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
645-1963-2-8	Iraq	Qasim, Abd al-Karim	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
645-1963-7-3	Iraq	Aref, Abd al-Salam	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
645-1963-11-13	Iraq	Aref, Abd al-Salam	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
645-1965-9-15	Iraq	Aref, Abd al-Salam	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
645-1966-6-30	Iraq	Aref, Abd al-Rahman	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
645-1968-7-17	Iraq	Aref, Abd al-Rahman	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
645-1970-1-20	Iraq	Bakr, Ahmed Hassan al-	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
645-1973-6-30	Iraq	Bakr, Ahmed Hassan al-	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
645-1995-6-14	Iraq	Hussein, Saddam	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
437-1999-12-24	Ivory Coast	Konan-Bédié, Henri	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
437-2000-9-18	Ivory Coast	Guéï, Robert	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
437-2000-10-25	Ivory Coast	Guéï, Robert	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
437-2001-1-7	Ivory Coast	Gbagbo, Laurent	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
437-2002-9-19	Ivory Coast	Gbagbo, Laurent	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
501-1982-8-1	Kenya	Moi, Daniel arap	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
812-1960-8-9	Laos	Phoumi Nosavan	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
570-1986-1-20	Lesotho	Jonathan, Leabua	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)

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Table A-7: Master Coup List – continued from previous page

ID	Country	Leader	Coup Type
570-1991-4-30	Lesotho	Lekhanya, Justin Metsing	Reshuffle Coup (S)
450-1980-4-12	Liberia	Tolbert, William	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
620-1969-9-1	Libya	Idris I	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
620-1980-8-7	Libya	Gaddafi, Muammar	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
620-1993-10-8	Libya	Gaddafi, Muammar	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
580-1975-2-11	Madagascar	Ratsimandrava, Richard	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
580-2010-11-17	Madagascar	Rajoelina, Andry	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
432-1968-11-19	Mali	Keïta, Modibo	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
432-1991-3-26	Mali	Traoré, Moussa	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
435-1978-7-10	Mauritania	Daddah, Moktar Ould	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
435-1979-4-6	Mauritania	Salek, Mustafa Ould	Reshuffle Coup (S)
435-1984-12-12	Mauritania	Haidalla, Mohamed Khouna Ould	Reshuffle Coup (S)
435-2003-6-8	Mauritania	Taya, Maaouya Ould	Reshuffle Coup (F)
435-2005-8-3	Mauritania	Taya, Maaouya Ould	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
712-1964-12-21	Mongolia	Tsedenbal, Yumjaagiin	Non-mil. Coup (F)
712-1984-8-23	Mongolia	Tsedenbal, Yumjaagiin	Non-mil. Coup (S)
600-1971-7-10	Morocco	Hassan II	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
600-1972-8-16	Morocco	Hassan II	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
541-1975-12-17	Mozambique	Machel, Samora	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
775-1988-9-18	Myanmar	Maung, Maung	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
775-1992-4-23	Myanmar	Saw Maung	Reshuffle Coup (S)
436-1963-12-3	Niger	Diori, Hamani	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
436-1974-4-15	Niger	Diori, Hamani	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
436-1976-3-15	Niger	Kountché, Seyni	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
436-1983-10-5	Niger	Kountché, Seyni	Reshuffle Coup (F)
436-1999-4-9	Niger	Maïnassara, Ibrahim Baré	Reshuffle Coup (S)
436-2010-2-18	Niger	Tandja, Mamadou	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
475-1975-7-29	Nigeria	Gowon, Yakubu	Reshuffle Coup (S)
475-1976-2-13	Nigeria	Mohammed, Murtala	Reshuffle Coup (F)
475-1985-8-27	Nigeria	Buhari, Muhammadu	Reshuffle Coup (S)
475-1990-4-22	Nigeria	Babangida, Ibrahim	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
678-1948-2-17	North Yemen	Yahya Muhammad Hamid ed-Din	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
678-1955-4-2	North Yemen	Ahmad bin Yahya	Reshuffle Coup (F)
678-1962-9-27	North Yemen	Badr, Muhammad al-	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
678-1967-11-5	North Yemen	Sallal, Abdullah al-	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
678-1968-8-30	North Yemen	Iryani, Abdul Rahman al-	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
678-1974-6-13	North Yemen	Iryani, Abdul Rahman al-	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
678-1978-5-6	North Yemen	Ghashmi, Ahmad al-	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
678-1978-10-15	North Yemen	Saleh, Ali Abdullah	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
698-1970-7-23	Oman	Said ibn Taimur	Reshuffle Coup (S)
770-1958-10-27	Pakistan	Mirza, Iskander	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
770-1969-3-25	Pakistan	Khan, Ayub	Reshuffle Coup (S)
770-1971-12-20	Pakistan	Khan, Yahya	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
770-1977-7-5	Pakistan	Bhutto, Zulfikar Ali	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
95-1951-5-10	Panama	Arias, Arnulfo	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
95-1969-12-14	Panama	Torrijos, Omar	Reshuffle Coup (F)

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Table A-7: Master Coup List – continued from previous page

ID	Country	Leader	Coup Type
95-1982-3-3	Panama	Flores Aguilar, Florencio	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
95-1985-9-25	Panama	Noriega, Manuel	Reshuffle Coup (F)
95-1988-3-16	Panama	Noriega, Manuel	Reshuffle Coup (F)
95-1989-10-3	Panama	Noriega, Manuel	Reshuffle Coup (F)
150-1947-3-7	Paraguay	Morínigo, Higinio	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
150-1947-4-26	Paraguay	Morínigo, Higinio	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
150-1948-6-3	Paraguay	Morínigo, Higinio	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
150-1949-1-30	Paraguay	Natalicio González, Juan	Reshuffle Coup (S)
150-1954-5-5	Paraguay	Chávez, Federico	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
150-1955-12-21	Paraguay	Stroessner, Alfredo	Reshuffle Coup (F)
150-1989-2-3	Paraguay	Stroessner, Alfredo	Reshuffle Coup (S)
135-1954-8-10	Peru	Odría, Manuel A.	Reshuffle Coup (F)
135-1956-2-16	Peru	Odría, Manuel A.	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
135-1963-3-3	Peru	Pérez Godoy, Ricardo	Reshuffle Coup (S)
135-1975-8-29	Peru	Velasco Alvarado, Juan	Reshuffle Coup (S)
135-1992-11-13	Peru	Fujimori, Alberto	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
135-2000-10-30	Peru	Fujimori, Alberto	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
840-1986-2-25	Philippines	Marcos, Ferdinand	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
290-1948-9-3	Poland	Bierut, Bolesław	Non-mil. Coup (S)
290-1981-10-18	Poland	Kania, Stanisław	Non-mil. Coup (S)
235-1946-10-10	Portugal	Salazar, António de Oliveira	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
235-1947-4-10	Portugal	Salazar, António de Oliveira	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
235-1961-4-8	Portugal	Salazar, António de Oliveira	Reshuffle Coup (F)
235-1962-1-1	Portugal	Salazar, António de Oliveira	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
235-1974-3-16	Portugal	Caetano, Marcelo	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
235-1974-4-25	Portugal	Caetano, Marcelo	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
360-1989-12-22	Romania	Ceaușescu, Nicolae	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
365-1957-6-18	Russia	Khrushchev, Nikita	Non-mil. Coup (F)
365-1964-10-15	Russia	Khrushchev, Nikita	Non-mil. Coup (S)
365-1991-8-21	Russia	Gorbachev, Mikhail	Reshuffle Coup (F)
365-1993-10-2	Russia	Yeltsin, Boris	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
517-1973-7-5	Rwanda	Kayibanda, Grégoire	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
517-1994-4-6	Rwanda	Habyarimana, Juvénal	Reshuffle Coup (S)
670-1964-3-26	Saudi Arabia	Faisal bin Abdulaziz	Reshuffle Coup (F)
433-1962-12-17	Senegal	Senghor, Léopold Sédar	Reshuffle Coup (F)
451-1968-4-18	Sierra Leone	Juxon-Smith, Andrew	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
451-1971-3-23	Sierra Leone	Stevens, Siaka	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
451-1992-4-29	Sierra Leone	Momoh, Joseph Saidu	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
451-1996-1-16	Sierra Leone	Strasser, Valentine	Reshuffle Coup (S)
520-1978-4-9	Somalia	Barre, Siad	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
732-1948-10-20	South Korea	Rhee, Syngman	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
817-1960-11-11	South Vietnam	Diem, Ngo Dinh	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
817-1963-11-1	South Vietnam	Diem, Ngo Dinh	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
817-1964-1-30	South Vietnam	Minh, Duong Vanh	Reshuffle Coup (S)
817-1965-2-19	South Vietnam	Khanh, Nguyen	Reshuffle Coup (F)
817-1965-2-20	South Vietnam	Khanh, Nguyen	Reshuffle Coup (S)

Continued below

Table A-7: Master Coup List – continued from previous page

ID	Country	Leader	Coup Type
680-1969-6-22	South Yemen	Shaabi, Qahtan al-	Reshuffle Coup (S)
680-1978-6-26	South Yemen	Rubay Ali, Salim	Reshuffle Coup (S)
680-1980-4-21	South Yemen	Ismail, Abdul Fattah	Non-mil. Coup (S)
680-1986-1-24	South Yemen	Nasir Muhammad, Ali	Reshuffle Coup (S)
625-1959-11-9	Sudan	Abboud, Ibrahim	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
625-1964-10-30	Sudan	Abboud, Ibrahim	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
625-1971-7-19	Sudan	Numeiri, Jaafar	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
625-1975-9-5	Sudan	Numeiri, Jaafar	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
625-1977-2-2	Sudan	Numeiri, Jaafar	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
625-1983-5-15	Sudan	Numeiri, Jaafar	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
625-1985-4-6	Sudan	Numeiri, Jaafar	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
625-1985-9-25	Sudan	Dhahab, Abdel Rahman Swar al-	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
625-1990-4-23	Sudan	Bashir, Omar al-	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
572-1983-8-10	Swaziland	Dzeliwe Shongwe	Reshuffle Coup (S)
652-1954-2-25	Syria	Shishakli, Adib	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
652-1962-3-31	Syria	Nahlawi, Abd al-Karim al-	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
652-1963-1-13	Syria	Zahr al-Din, Abd al-Karim	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
652-1963-3-8	Syria	Zahr al-Din, Abd al-Karim	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
652-1963-7-18	Syria	Atassi, Lu'ay al-	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
652-1966-2-23	Syria	Hafiz, Amin al-	Reshuffle Coup (S)
652-1966-9-8	Syria	Jadid, Salah	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
652-1970-11-13	Syria	Jadid, Salah	Reshuffle Coup (S)
652-1984-3-30	Syria	Asad, Hafez al-	Reshuffle Coup (F)
702-1992-5-8	Tajikistan	Nabiyev, Rahmon	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
702-1992-9-7	Tajikistan	Nabiyev, Rahmon	Non-mil. Coup (S)
800-1947-11-8	Thailand	Pridi, Banomyong	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
800-1948-9-30	Thailand	Phibun Songkhram, Luang	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
800-1949-2-26	Thailand	Phibun Songkhram, Luang	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
800-1951-6-29	Thailand	Phibun Songkhram, Luang	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
800-1957-9-16	Thailand	Phibun Songkhram, Luang	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
800-1977-3-26	Thailand	Chaloryu, Sangad	Reshuffle Coup (F)
800-1981-4-1	Thailand	Prem Tinsulanonda	Reshuffle Coup (F)
800-1985-9-9	Thailand	Prem Tinsulanonda	Reshuffle Coup (F)
461-1963-1-13	Togo	Olympio, Sylvanus	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
461-2005-2-5	Togo	Eyadéma, Gnassingbé	Reshuffle Coup (S)
616-1987-11-7	Tunisia	Bourguiba, Habib	Reshuffle Coup (S)
640-1960-5-27	Turkey	Menderes, Adnan	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
500-1971-1-25	Uganda	Obote, Milton	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
500-1974-3-23	Uganda	Amin, Idi	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
500-1974-11-11	Uganda	Amin, Idi	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
500-1976-8-15	Uganda	Amin, Idi	Reshuffle Coup (F)
500-1977-6-18	Uganda	Amin, Idi	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
500-1985-7-27	Uganda	Obote, Milton	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
500-1988-4-7	Uganda	Museveni, Yoweri	Reshuffle Coup (F)
165-1974-5-21	Uruguay	Posse, Hugo Chiappe	Reshuffle Coup (S)
101-1952-9-29	Venezuela	Pérez Jiménez, Marcos	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)

Continued below

Table A-7: Master Coup List – continued from previous page

ID	Country	Leader	Coup Type
101-1958-1-1	Venezuela	Pérez Jiménez, Marcos	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
101-1958-1-23	Venezuela	Pérez Jiménez, Marcos	Reg. Ch. Coup (S)
551-1990-6-30	Zambia	Kaunda, Kenneth	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
551-1997-10-28	Zambia	Chiluba, Frederick	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)
552-1982-6-24	Zimbabwe	Mugabe, Robert	Reg. Ch. Coup (F)

1.4 Personalism data

The level of a dictator's personal power as compared with his regime elites is latent in nature. Therefore, we utilize the eight observable indicators to construct the personalism score. The following items are coded for every regime-year observation as of January 1st.[39]

1. *Personal paramilitary*: Regime leader creates paramilitary forces, a president's guard, or new security forces apparently loyal to himself **(0/1)**
2. *Personal control*: Security apparatus controlled personally by regime leader **(0/1)**
3. *Personal appointment*: Regime leader has discretion over appointments to high office or appoints relatives to these positions **(0/1)**
4. *Personal purge*: Regime leader imprisons/kills officers from other groups without a reasonably fair trial **(0/1)**
5. *Personal promotion*: Regime leader promotes officers loyal to himself or from his ethnic, tribal, regional, or religious group OR widespread forced retirements **(0/1)**
6. *Personal exe. comm.*: Regime leader chooses party executive committee members **(0/1)**
7. *Personal party*: Regime leader or a close ally creates a party to support the regime after his accession to office **(0/1)**
8. *Rubberstamp party*: Party executive committee has no policy independence from the regime leader **(0/1)**

All items are binary responses and positive responses are coded as 1s. Because we have dichotomous indicators, we employ the two-parameter logistic Item Response Theory model to construct the latent scale of *Personalism score*. The IRT models determine the relationship between the latent ability (in this case, the dictator's level of personal power) and the items (the eight observable indicators) (Reise and Waller 2009). The two-parameter logistic model allows us to fit binary responses that vary in their difficulty and discrimination.

39. Because the data is collected for January 1 of each calendar year, the measure picks up changes in these indicators in the prior calendar year, effectively lagging the relevant information by one year. Refer to Wright (2021)'s supplementary material for the codebook of the data.

Table A-8: IRT Two-parameter Logistic Model

Item	**Discrimination**	**Difficulty** (θ)
Personal appointment	2.922	-.419
Personal exe. comm.	2.145	.607
Rubberstamp party	2.007	.678
Personal control	1.762	-.332
Personal purge	1.542	.512
Personal promotion	1.357	.311
Personal party	1.241	1.617
Personal paramilitary	1.111	.678

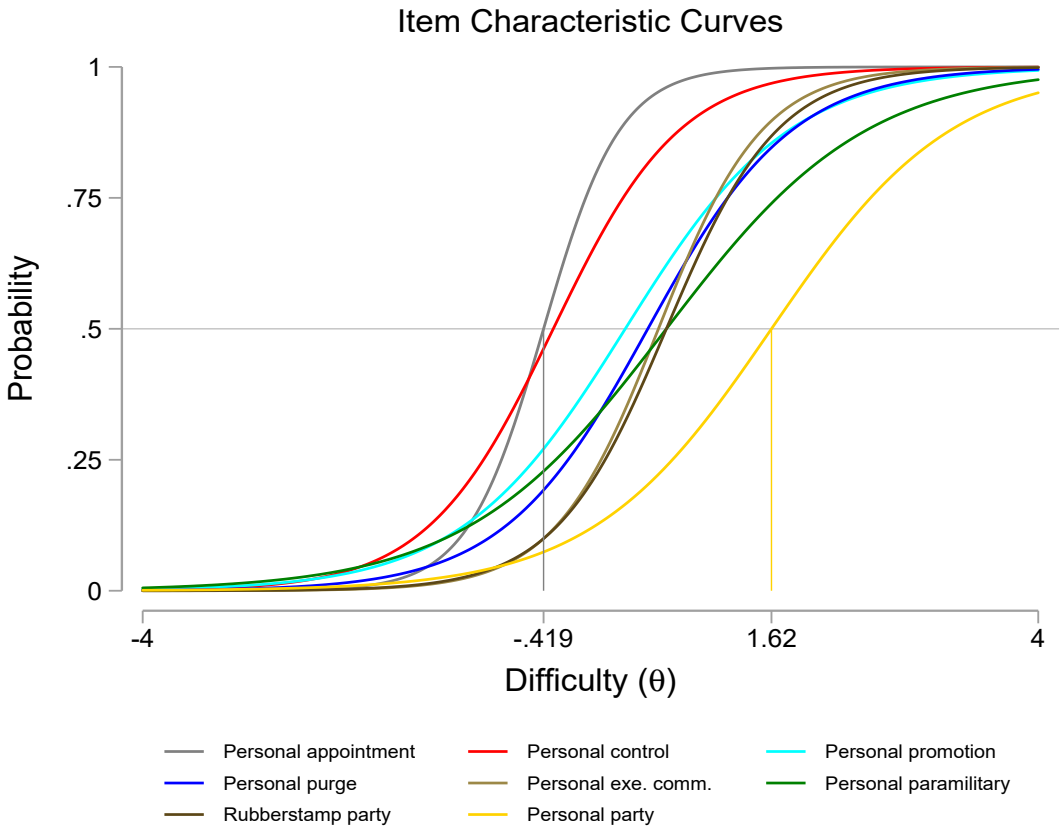

Figure A-1: Two-parameter Logistic IRT Item Response Curves

Table A-8 presents the discrimination and difficulty parameters for each item. *Personal appointment* has the highest level of discrimination, which is the ability to distinguish between lower and higher levels of personal power. In other words, the dictator's discretion to appoint high offices based on personal loyalty provides the greatest amount of information on whether the dictator has achieved a highly personalized regime. On the other hand, the difficulty parameter (θ) indicates the probability of positive observation for each personalization policy. In this case, it is least likely to find positive observations creation of a personal supporting party after coming to power is than any other types of personalization indicators.

The item response curves in Figure A-1 are the visual representations of the discrimination and difficulty parameters for each observable indicator. Steeper curves illustrate higher levels of discrimination. The curve for *Personal appointment* is the steepest, revealing the greatest amount of information. Second, the difficulty parameter of each policy is located on the point at which the item response curve crosses the 0.5 probability of positive observation. Since a zero mean for θ (the latent ability) is assumed, relatively "easier" items are located on the left-side with negative difficulty parameter values while relatively "harder" items are located on the right-side with positive difficulty parameter values.

2 Appendix B: Alternative Assassination coding and Assassination plots

2.1 Alternative assassination coding

This appendix reports results using slightly different operationalizations of the assassinations variable. In the main text we use our preferred measure: assassinations – both ambiguous and unambiguous – that do not occur during a coup attempt events. Because we distinguish between unambiguous and ambiguous cases as well as whether they occur during coup attempts, there are logically four categories because it makes little sense to examine ambiguous coups in isolation. The number in parentheses is the total number of events in each category.

- ambiguous [only NOT during coup] + unambiguous [only NOT during coup] (109)
- ambiguous [DURING and NOT during coup] + unambiguous [DURING and NOT during coup] (137)
- unambiguous only [only NOT during coup] (81)
- unambiguous only [DURING and NOT during coup] (108)

As noted, the results in the main text use the first grouping, our preferred. However, we check the results, reported in Figure B-1, to ensure that this choice is not altering the findings. The lowess curve in cyan is the result from our preferred coding. The other three curves result from the other three approaches. The results do not change appreciably.

2.2 Assassination plots

As explained in the main text, we exclude *assassination plots* from our measure of assassination attempts if the evidence suggested that the candidate event did not involve observable concrete actions, often because would-be assassins were arrested before they could spring into action (that is, the assassination attempt was preempted). It is worth

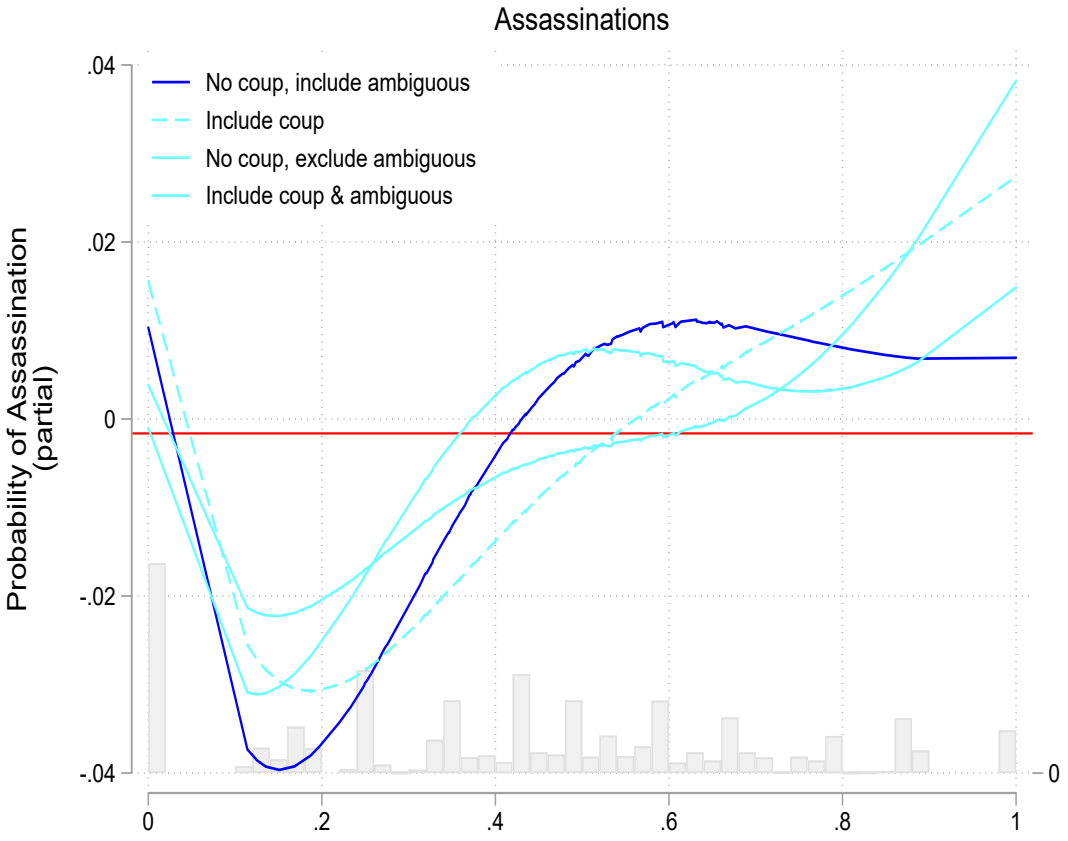

Figure B-1: Alternate codings of Assassinations variable

noting that our list of plots is almost certainly biased down and is an underestimate, as we only include plots identified from one of our cross-referenced datasets of assassination attempts. We do not include any and all plots and conspiracy theories over the 1946 to 2010 period. Table B-1 lists the 17 assassination plots included in our robustness checks.

Table B-1: Assassination Plots against Autocratic Leaders, 1946–2010

Regime	*Leader*	*Date*	*Category*
Cuba 59-NA	Castro, Fidel	March 26, 1961	plot
Cuba 59-NA	Castro, Fidel	July 19, 1961	plot
Cuba 59-NA	Castro, Fidel	April 7, 1963	plot
Cuba 59-NA	Castro, Fidel	July 11, 1981	plot
Haiti 57-86	Duvalier, François	April 30, 1963	plot
Mexico 15-00	Aleman Valdes	June 25, 1952	plot
Nicaragua 36-79	Somoza Garcia, Anastasio	April 3, 1954	plot
Bolivia 69-71	Torres, Juan José	April 15, 1971	plot
Gambia 94-NA	Jammeh, Yahya	January 27, 1995	plot
Benin 72-90	Kérékou, Mathieu	March 26, 1988	plot
Chad 82-90	Habré, Hissène	April 1, 1989	plot
Congo/Zaire 60-97	Mobutu, Joseph-Désiré	May 30, 1966	plot
Libya 69-11	Gaddafi, Muammar	December 19, 1981	plot
Iran 79-NA	Khomeini, Ruhollah	April 8, 1982	plot
Jordan 46-NA	Hussein	July 1, 1958	plot
China 49-NA	Mao Zedong	September 13, 1971	plot
Myanmar 62-88	Ne Win	July 2, 1976	plot

Figure B-2 shows the main semiparametric result when we add assassination plots to the analysis. Each graph shows two curves: the solid (blue) line represents the nonlinear relationship between personalism and the outcome that combines verified assassination attempts and assassination plots (i.e. *with* plots). The dashed (red) line in each plot reproduces the main result for assassination attempts (i.e. *without* plots) that we report in Figure 2 in the main text. The shape of the curve when adding plots is roughly the same as without plots. However, positive slope of the curve (i.e. from 0.13 to 0.67) is steeper with assassinations plots than without. Adding plots to the analysis thus makes the main finding for assassinations stronger.

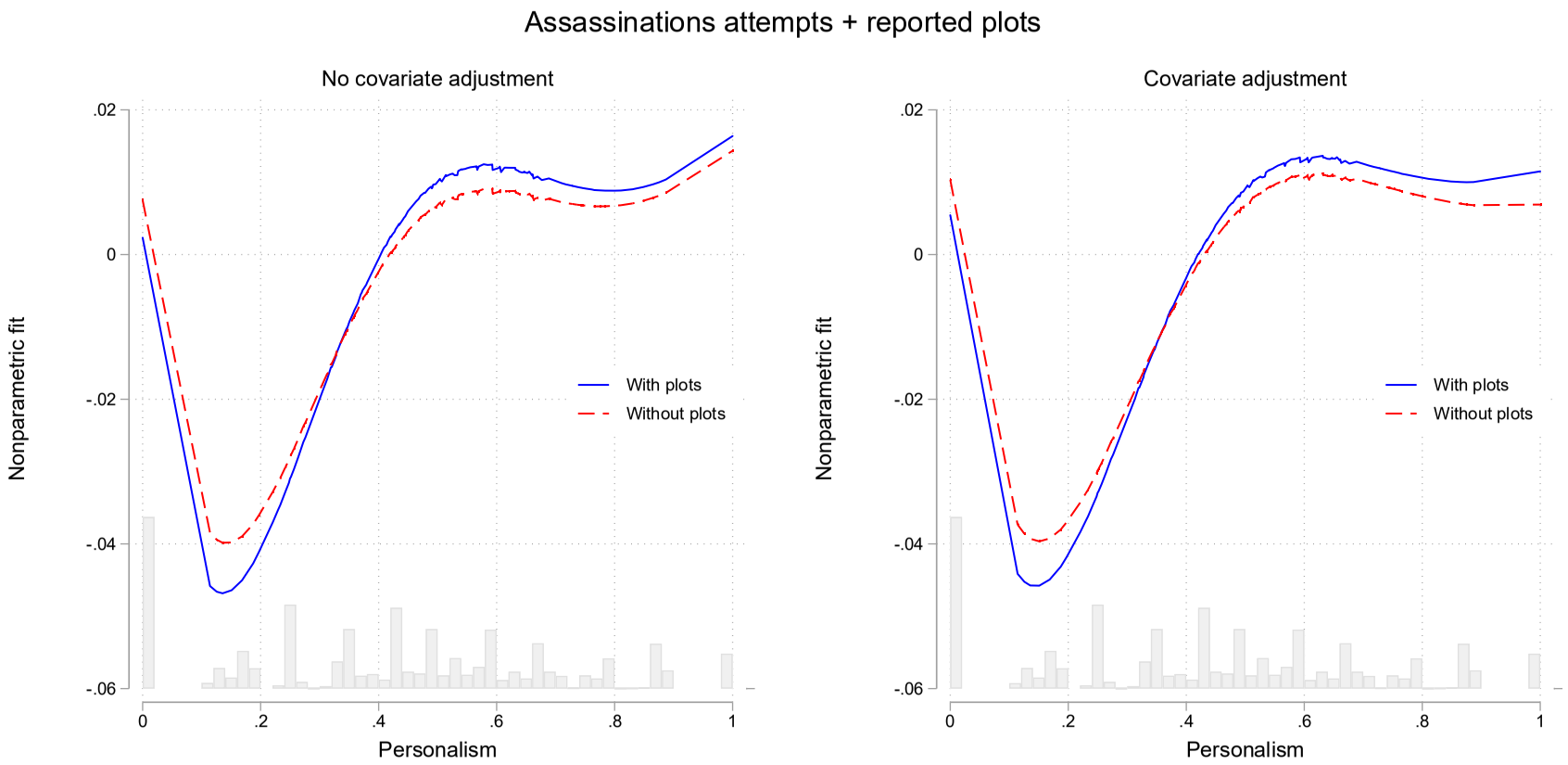

Figure B-2: Analysis of assassination attempts and plots

Hidden assassination attempts While we have gone to great lengths to uncover reports of assassination attempts from secondary sources, there may be some failed ones that are never reported because the leader hides this information. Dictators who successfully thwart an assassination attempt may have an incentive to hide this information from other elites because they could interpret a failed assassination bid as a public sign of weakness, which, in turn, could spark coordinated effort to oust the leader. Thus some assassination attempts may be hidden from public view. These are not missing observations in the traditional sense of not having information about whether the event occurs; instead hidden assassination attempts are observations incorrectly recorded as "no assassination" when in fact there has been an attempt.

Complicating this, hidden assassinations may not be randomly distributed among all leaders. Indeed, we suspect that as leaders accumulate more personal power they are more likely to successfully hide potentially damaging information.[40] If this is the case, then hidden assassination attempts, which we incorrectly code as no attempt, may be more likely at higher personalism levels. Thus if personalism increases the incidence of hidden attempts, our analysis for assassinations in Figures 2 and 3 may be biased. However, adding simulated 'hidden' assassinations more often to high personalism cases than to low ones would pull the semiparametric fit upwards on the right side of the (assassination) plots in Figure 2, strengthening a possible positive slope. Thus our reported results may be conservative.[41]

A second way to address this issue is to add assassination plots to the analysis under the assumption that these plots are a (weak) signal of underlying discontent within the elite and thus a proxy for failed but hidden assassination attempts. In researching

40. There are related but distinct reasons for why this might be the case. While all dictatorships have poor information transfer mechanisms (Magee and Doces 2015), personalist dictators are more likely to pursue a divide-and-rule strategy under which he prefers to keep information about relative strength of different elite groups to himself (Acemoglu et al. 2004). On the other hand, personalist dictators tend to have greater control over the domestic media (Stier 2015), and thus may be more capable of pulling off cover ups.

41. If, however, hidden (failed) assassination attempts are more likely when leaders have little power (but not the lowest level) relative to other elites, then our findings for assassinations may be upwardly biased.

attempted assassinations and coups, we uncovered numerous references in the historical record to assassination plots but did not code these as verified assassination attempts because the best available evidence suggests the plot was aborted or preempted before concrete actions targeting the leader were taken. Take Fidel Castro, for example. According to Escalante (2006), Cuba's long-time secret service chief entrusted with keeping Castro alive, Castro survived as many as 634 "attempts" on his life. However, it is clear most of these were pie-in-the-sky plots that never got off the ground. Although it is well known that the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) intensively plotted many ways to kill Castro via "Operation Mongoose" (from poisoning his cigar to sniper fire), ultimately "the CIA had no way of successfully infiltrating Cuba and getting inside Castro's personal zone of access" (Spignesi 2016, 24). The CIA paid mafia hitmen to do the job, but the CIA simply got played. The mobsters took the money but in reality they did "absolutely nothing" to organize "a feasible assassination plot" (24). In our data, we code no assassination attempts against Castro and only a handful of the most serious plots (e.g. plotters were caught "red-handed" and arrested with weapons caches).[42]

We thus re-examine the semiparametric results with 15 assassination plots added to verified assassination attempts. Coup plots – or at least the ones we have uncovered – are indeed more likely to occur at higher levels of personalism than at lower levels.[43] This pattern of plots increasing in personalism, in itself, is consistent with the theoretical expectation that assassination attempts are more likely occur at higher levels of personalism. And, as we show above in Figure B-2, adding assassination plots to the analysis strengthens the result, making the positive slope (in the middle range of personalism) more steep than without these plots. If coup plots are a plausible proxy for hidden assassination attempts, this analysis again suggests that results for assassinations reported in Figures 2 and 3 are conservative.

42. Our conservative approach to counting such assassination plots protects against over-counting plots fabricated or staged by the regime as a pretext to purge opposition figures.

43. Only 2 of the 15 plots occur in the bottom half of the personalism distribution.

3 Appendix C: Specification and covariate adjustment

Specification The specifications in the main text have either (a) no covariate adjustments (save for duration polynomials and fixed effects) or (b) the following covariate adjustments: leader time in power (log), leader age, whether the leader was a member of the military prior to seizing power, whether the regime has a supporting political party, GDP per capita (log), oil per capita (log), and civil and international conflict. Here we briefly discuss the logic of adjusting for these covariates.

We adjust for two leader characteristics: how long the leader has been in power and leader age. Both features shape coup risk (Sudduth 2017). And personalization, on average, is higher for older and longer-tenured leaders. Indeed, some even take leader tenure in power as a measure of personalism itself (Magaloni, Chu, and Min 2013). While we conceptualize this feature of leaders as a potential confounder, we acknowledge that it is correlated with personalism, even if not uniformly in different types of regimes (Wright 2021, Appendix).

Leaders who hail from the military may have particular advantages relative to their civilian counterparts in assessing threats from within, making coups less likely because better information can facilitate power-sharing. However, military-led dictatorships are also the most fragile and the most likely to experience coups (e.g. Geddes 1999; Kim and Kroeger 2018; Sudduth and Bell 2018). We therefore adjust for whether the regime is led by someone whose main career prior to becoming regime leader was in the military.

Level of development and access to resource rents may both structure coup opportunities and facilitate personalization. For example, Wright, Frantz, and Geddes (2015) find that oil stabilizes autocracies, in part, by boosting military expenditures that, in turn, may reduce coup risk. And Fails (2019) finds that increasing oil rents leads to more personalization. Perhaps the best cross-section predictor of coups is level of development (Londregan and Poole 1990). Therefore we adjust for both of these structural factors (GDP per capita and oil rents).

Finally, the conflict environment may influence coup risk, particularly if conflict induces elites to hold autocratic leaders accountable (via coups) (Chiozza and Goemans 2004; Piplani and Talmadge 2016). Further, civil conflict and coups may constitute two threats to rulers that force them to trade-off their relative risks (Roessler 2011; Svolik 2013). And the conflict environment may provide opportunities for leaders to purge elites or otherwise alter the composition of their ruling circle (Bell and Sudduth 2017). For example, Song and Wright (2018) point out that the North Korean conflict with the U.N. provided an opportunity for Kim Il Sung to purge his most senior general, who was also closest to the Chinese PLA. And Blaydes (2018) shows that former Iraqi President Hussein further narrowed his ruling coalition, purging military elites from non-Tikriti Sunni tribes, during conflict with the Kurds after the end of the first Persian Gulf war. This both increased personalization and spurred backlash in the form of coup attempts.

These observable covariate adjustments are not the only ones that might be included and some of these covariates might, in some applications, be conceived as post-treatment phenomena. We address the former by adjusting for additional potential confounders in this Appendix. An example of the latter might be oil rents: political instability in the form of coups and assassinations could alter international investment in oil production and therefore oil rents. By reporting results from tests without adjustment for observed covariates we show that findings are unlikely to result from post-treatment bias.

Two-line tests with covariate adjustment Figure C-1 shows the results for fully parametric two-line tests with covariate adjustment. The main text (Figure 3) shows results from these tests with no covariate adjustment. The results are slightly stronger when we adjust for covariates, largely due to accounting for leader time in power, which is increasing (on average) in personalism.

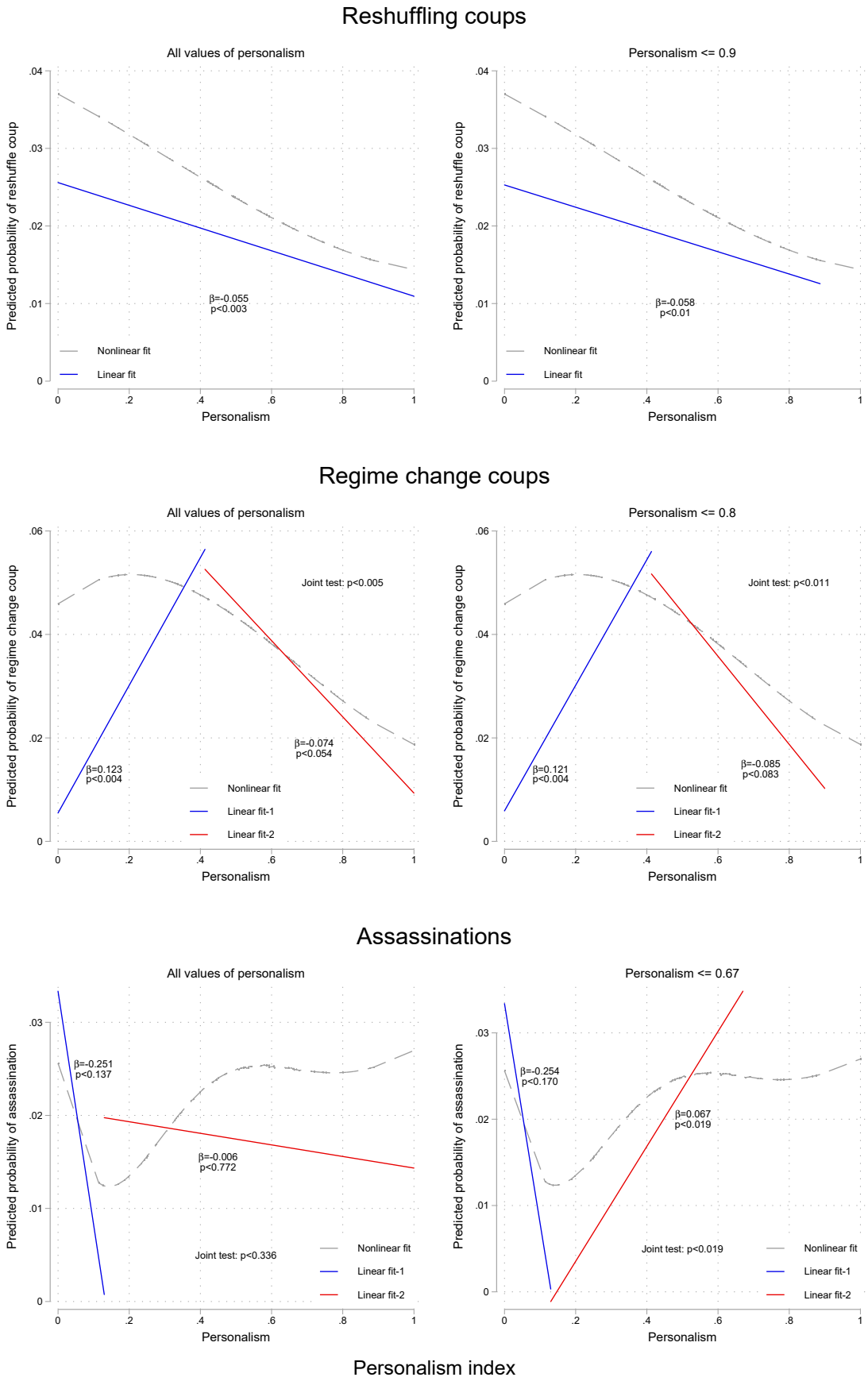

Figure C-1: Two-line tests with covariate adjustment

4 Appendix D: Details of the parametric two-lines test

In the main text we report flexible estimates of a (potentially) nonlinear relationship between personalism and the outcomes of interest. The semiparametric estimator in equation 2 conditions out panel fixed effects and covariates, leaving a residualized relationship between two series of data: the residualized outcome and the residualized explanatory variable of interest. The estimator then fits these two residualized series with splines that allow for many possible nonlinear functions relating the conditional variation in each series to the conditional variation in the other.

A parametric estimator that tests for nonlinear marginal effects for $personalism$ takes these residualized series and fits a quadratic function (i.e. OLS, FE with $personalism$ and $personalism^2$) to the data. Indeed, we can estimate the BL semiparameteric model, calculate the residualized series, and then fit these residuals with a quadratic function ourselves and obtain the a quadratic fit as we would if we fit the OLS + FE with $personalism$ and $personalism^2$ as RHS variables.

The left plot in Figure D-1 shows the results for regime change coups. The magenta line depicts the result from the semiparametric BL estimator (fitted values); this is the result we reported in the main text in our initial manuscript draft. Next, we calculated the residualized series from this estimator and fit the series in three ways: (a) linear fit of the residuals (green line); (b) quadratic fit of the residuals (cyan line); and (c) polynomial fit of the residuals (light blue line). For the latter, polynomial fit of the residuals, we also plot the 95 percent error bands for this fit (in gray).

Looking at the left plot for regime change coups, we can see that imposing a linear fit on the residualized series produces a constant negative marginal effect estimate; the constant slope (or marginal effect) is an assumption of the linear model fit and negative slope results from fitting the data. In a standard parametric model, the estimate for the linear marginal effect (in this case a negative, linear, constant slope) is not statistically significant at conventional levels. Next, the quadratic fit in cyan shows at first a positive

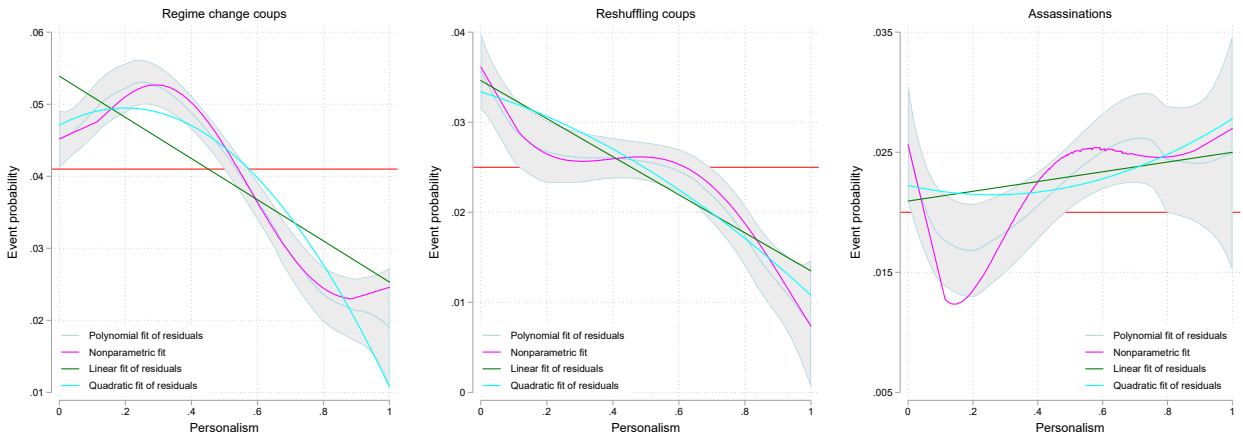

Figure D-1: Results with various functional form assumptions

marginal effect (i.e. positive slope) and then a negative marginal effect (i.e. negative slope). In a standard parametric quadratic fit, the coefficient estimates are positive and negative, respectively, for *personalism* and $personalism^2$. These estimates are individually and jointly signficant at the 0.05 level. Finally, the polynomial fit of the residuals closely matches BL semiparametric fit.

There are two further points to consider when interpreting the quadratic fit. First, as can be seen in the left plot for regime change coups and the right plot for assassinations, fitting the quadratic functional form does not match the data as well as the polynomial form. That said, in the left plot for regime change coups, much of the line depicting the quadratic fit lies within the 95 error band of the polynomial fit. This means that the quadratic fit, while not fitting the data as well as the polynomial fit, is not too far off the mark. In the right plot assassinations, however, the quadratic fit misses most of the steep decline in assassinations as personalism increases at the lowest levels. Importantly, the semiparametric fitted values (and polynomial fit of the residuals) *could have*, theoretically matched closely to the quadratic fit. But they do not. That is, a quadratic fit (indeed a linear fit) is one type of fit nested within the set of possible fits that could possibly result from the more flexible polynomial fit. The nonparametric fit (and the polynomial fit of the residuals) are more flexible approaches that impose fewer assumptions about the data generating process than either the linear or quadratic fits.

Second, the main problem with a quadratic fit is not necessarily that it always poorly fits the data (indeed most parametric estimates are likely to fit the data poorly relative to a semiparametric estimate); rather, even though the quadratic fit is statistically significant (i.e. the data in the residualized series is close enough to the quadratic fit line that we call the estimates on x and x^2 statistically significant) the marginal effect in one direction may *not* be statistically significant. For example, the positive slope in the quadratic fit in the left plot for regime change coups may not be statistically significantly different than zero even though the estimates of $personalism$ and $personalism^2$ are individually and jointly significant.

In the regime change coup model in the left plot, we can see that the quadratic fit under-estimates the slopes for both the decreasing and increasing regions of the fit. Even so, the parametric quadratic fit *could* still obtain a statistically significant estimates of x and x^2 but the slope of the fit in one region may still be zero (Simonsohn 2018). That is, a quadratic parametric test may, in some cases, yield false confidence that both slopes (positive and negative) are statistically significant.[44] The reason for this is: a positive slope (in the left plot of regime change coups) at low levels of personalism could be significant in a range *outside* the parameter space (i.e. in unobserved, very low values of personalism) but not even positive within the observed parameter space. That is, if we were to draw the quadratic fit line given in the left plot for regime change coups into the (unobserved) parameter space for personalism at values (-1, 0), the quadratic fit line would be negative in this space but not negative in the (observed) space between (0,0.2). The two-lines test was developed to address this issue because it imposes two constant slopes in opposite directions using the data within the observed parameter space.

This issue can be seen visually if we focus, in this application, on low values of personalism in the regime-change coup model (i.e left plot in Figure D-1). Figure D-2 plots the semiparametric fit (in blue) over the space (0, 0.2) on the personalism index. This is the fit line we report as the main result throughout. Next, in red, we plot

44. Indeed, with a quadratic fit, the slopes are not constant within the regions of the observed parameter space (i.e. levels of personalism in our application).

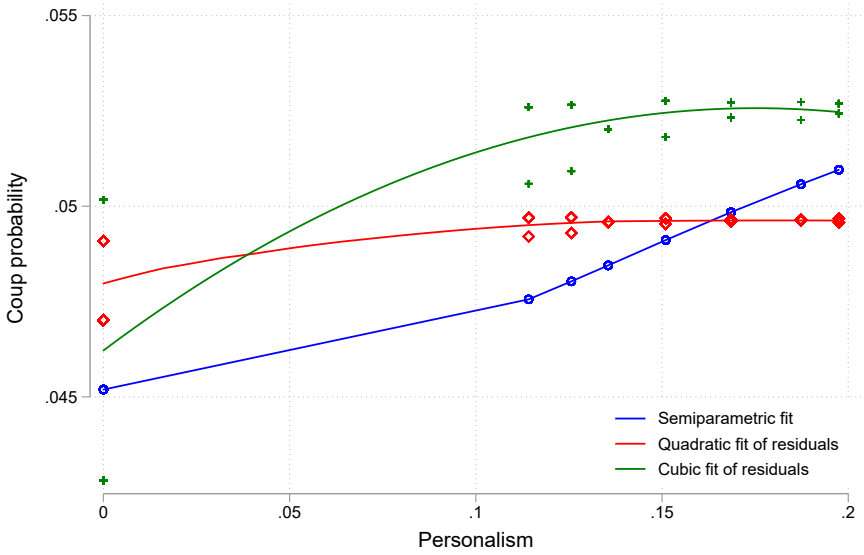

Figure D-2: Functional form fits for Regime change coups at low levels of personalism

the quadratic fit of the residualized series; finally, in green we plot the cubic fit of the residualized series. We emphasize that the quadratic functional from in a fully parametric model yields statistically significant estimates in expected directions for *personalism* and $personalist^2$ for the full parameter space of (0,1) for personalism.

In this plot, however, we are concerned with whether the slope of the quadratic fit in the space from (0, 0.2) is actually positive and statistically significant *in this space*. The red line depicting the quadratic fit is relatively flat while the cubic fit and the semiparametric fits are both more steep in this space. The standard parametric test of the quadratic fit, which produces the red fit line could be statistically significant (i.e. both *personalism* and $personalist^2$ are significant) but the positive slope in red in this Figure might not be. If this were the case, then the standard parametric test of the quadratic functional form could yield a false positive. The two-lines test addresses this issue.

Choosing the x_c value in the two-lines test The two lines parameteric test is designed to find two lines with signed slopes in the opposite direction (and within the observed parameter space) that are the 'best fit' for the data. In a standard one-line

parametric test, we assume there is one slope and the estimator picks a (conditional) slope (and constant) to best fit the data. The value of the slope is not chosen ahead of time; instead the estimator picks a (conditional) slope/constant pair that minimizes errors (i.e. 'least squares'). In the two-line test, the slope/constant values are not chosen ahead of time either, only the fact that there are two slopes. But to estimate two lines (and not one), we must also choose a point x_c at which to split the parameter space to test the two lines.

We conduct a simulation to search for an x_c value that best fits two lines. One approach is to minimize the joint significance of the slopes of the two lines. However, this approach will not (necessarily) yield an x_c value that is most likely to produce two significant slope estimates. Instead, we use a simulation approach that examines the p-values for each of the two slope estimates and the joint p-value. We then provide a test of that penalizes x_c values when they yield p-values for one or both slopes that are large. In the spirit of an OLS estimator, the test is the following where p_1 is the p-value of the first slope and p_1 is the p-value of the second:

$$test = \frac{\sqrt{(p_1^2 + p_2^2)}}{2} \tag{3}$$

The x_c value is chosen to minimize the value of this test. In contrast the a simple average of the two p-values, this test penalizes an x_c value that yields a large p-value for either of the slopes. x_c is thus chosen to maximize both the difference in slope estimates (i.e. fit) and statistical power for both line estimates, which, in practice means, finding an x_c that privilages minimizing the p-value for the statistically weaker (i.e. less precise) estimate (Simonsohn 2018, 546). By design, results are sensitive to the choice of x_c because that is the point of maximizing fit and statistical power. Choosing a different x_c would (potentially) alter the joint p-value and alter the respective slope coefficient estimates. That is, choosing a different x_c would also not yield two fit lines that minimizes the errors; and thus would not be the 'least squares' estimate.

One way to think about choosing x_c is that it is similar to what happens with a quadratic fit (in a linear estimator): the maximum (or minimum) of the quadratic fit curve is given by the estimated least squares slopes of x and x^2. That is, the estimator picks a 'best fit' to minimize errors given the assumptions implied by the quadratic functional form. And this 'best fit' of a quadratic form that minimizes errors will pick a maximum (or minimum) of the curve, in the process picking a point for the apex of the quadratic curve, given estimates of x and x^2. A two-lines test is no different in the sense that the estimator picks the best fit for two lines given the data, which means picking an x_c value (similar to the apex given by a quadratic curve) that produces two lines that best fit the data.

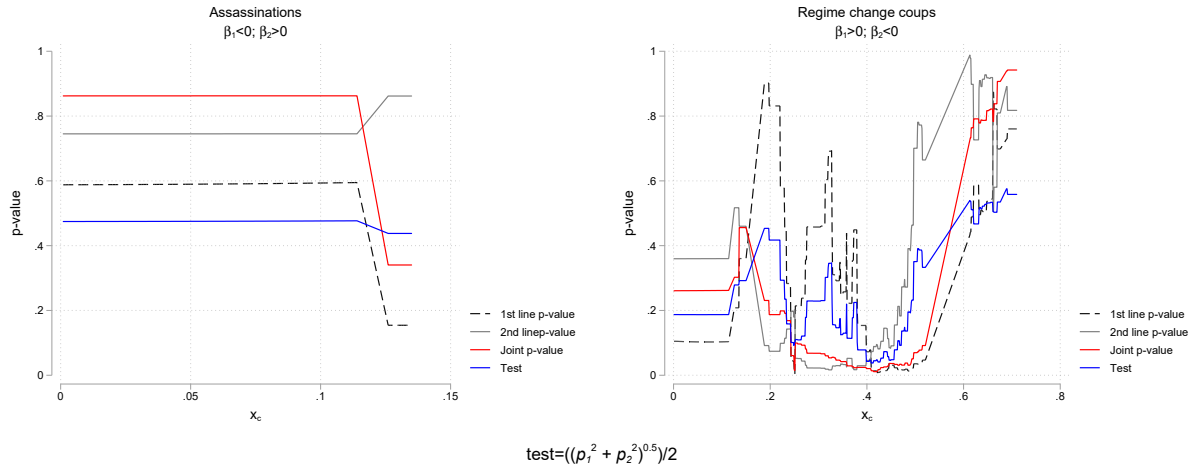

Figure D-3: p-value tests for x_c values

Figure D-3 shows the p-values and tests for the Assassinations model (left plot) and the Regime change coup model (right plot).[45] In these plots, we show the p-values for four tests: the respective one-line slope estimates (one slope in each direction); the joint p-value; and the quadratic test we use to choose the x_c value. We restrict the plots to x_c values where the signs of the two slopes are in the opposite direction.

The left plot shows the p-values for the Assassinations model. First note that is a relatively small range in which x_c values yield slope coefficients in opposite directions

45. Recall that we do not conduct a two-lines test because the empirical expectation from the theory that we want to test a (one-line) linear slope expectation.

(x_c<=0.13). Second, minimizing three quantites of interest (p-value for slope 1, joint p-value, and the test p-value) all yield the same x_c value of 0.13, which is what we use in the analysis reported in the main text.

The right plot shows the p-values for the Regime change coup model. First note that is a relatively large range in which x_c values yield slope coefficients in opposite directions (x_c<=0.70). Second, minimizing different quantites of interest yields slightly different values of x_c. Minimizing the joint p-value (red line) would yield $x_c = 0.413$, whereas minimizing the test value (blue line) yields $x_c = 0.415$. The plot also illustrates why these values are roughly around 0.41: that is the x_c value where both p_1 and p_2 are relatively low. As x_c increases from 0.41, p_1 decrease, but p_2 increases substantially. Thus even though x_c=0.41 does not minimize p_1, it is the lowest x_c value where both p-values are relatively low.

5 Appendix E: Additional tests, semiparametric estimator

Degree selection for splines Each set of semiparametric tests shown in Figure 2 in the main text sets the degree of the spline fit for visualization of the (possible) non-linear relationships. We choose the lowest degree that stabilizes the curve, such that increasing the splines does than alter the visual pattern in each plot: reshuffling coups (3); regime change coups (4); and assassinations (5).

In each plot in Figure E-1 the curves shown in represent spline degree selections that change the visual pattern as we increase degrees. The curve shown in is the degree selection we chose for the reported results. And, finally, the curves in gray (which are difficult to distinguish visually from the blue curve) represent splines with higher degrees. The point of the plots is that we can visually distinguish the red curves from the blue one, but we cannot easily distinguish the gray from the red. The interpretation is therefore that increasing spline degrees beyond that shown in blue does not alter the visual patterns reported in the main text. In the spirit of not making a priori assumptions about the shape of (possible) nonlinear curves linking personalism to the outcomes, we chose the most flexible curve with the fewest degrees for each outcome.

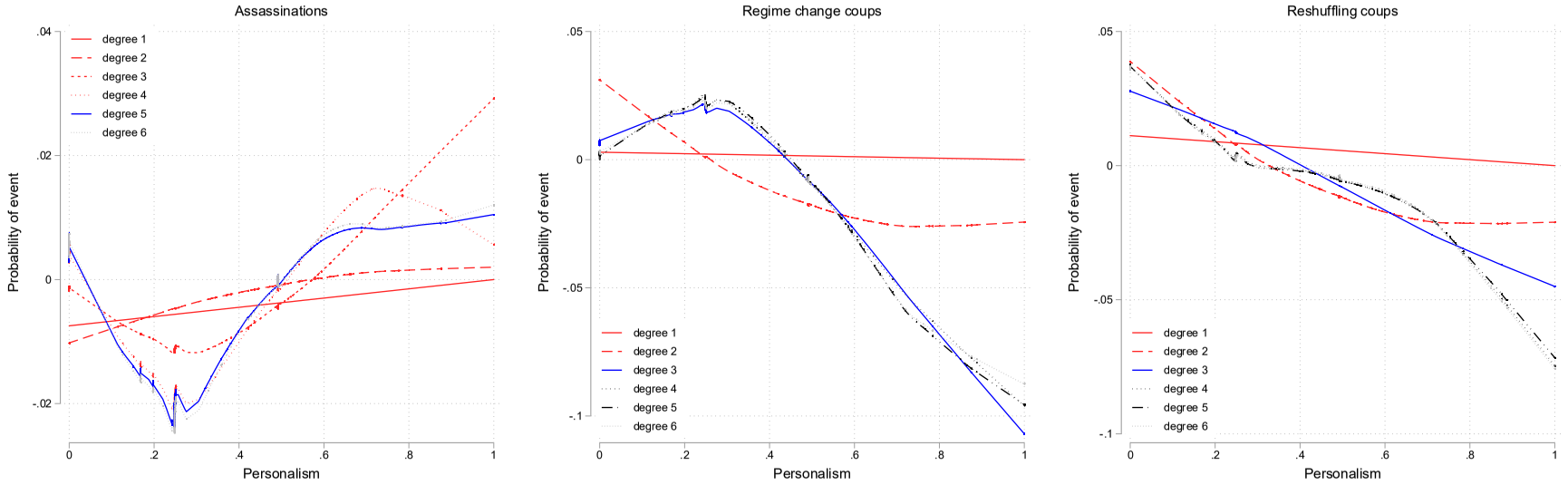

Figure E-1: Spline degree selection. Unadjusted vertical scale.

Additional tests The following plots provide results from three sets of tests for each outcome variable: assassinations, regime change coups, and reshuffling coups. For each set of tests, we plot the result from the full model specification shown in the main text to facilitate visual comparison. This result is shown with the cyan-colored line in each plot.

The first set of tests alter the main specification, first by substituting time trends (linear and quadratic) for year effects. Then we drop sets of covariates: the leader variables (time in power, leader age); institutional variables (military-led regime and support party); structural variables (GDP per capita and oil rents); and conflict (international and civil). The next set of tests for each outcome add covariates to the specification, one at a time: population size; ethnic exclusion (size of ethnic groups excluded from executive power); legislative competition; election; observed repression; time since coup/assassination (outcome other than the modeled outcome); military spending; and size of the military. The last set of tests for each outcome leave out one geographic region of the world at a time: the Americas; Europe; Central and West Africa; East and Southern Africa; the Middle East and North Africa; and Asia.

These test reveal two results that differ from the findings reported in Figure 2 in the main text. First, overall, there is variation in the slope of personalism and assassination risk above 0.65. While this slope is almost always positive in these additional tests, when we omit autocracies from the MENA region, assassination risk is declining at high levels of personalism. (A brief inspection of Figure 1 in the main text reveals that assassination attempts are also most common in MENA autocracies. This would suggest a more negative relationship – not a U-shaped relationship – between personalism and assassinations.) That said, the lack of robustness in the U-shaped assassination relationship is also evident in the parametric models reported in the main text. Second, the slope of the relationship between personalism and regime change coups is increasing in some specifications above 0.9 on personalism scale. We observe this in the plots for regime change coups in Figure 2 in the main text as well but note that this marginally increasing slope from 0.9 to 1.0 on this scale has substantial variation in various robustness tests.

5.1 Assassinations

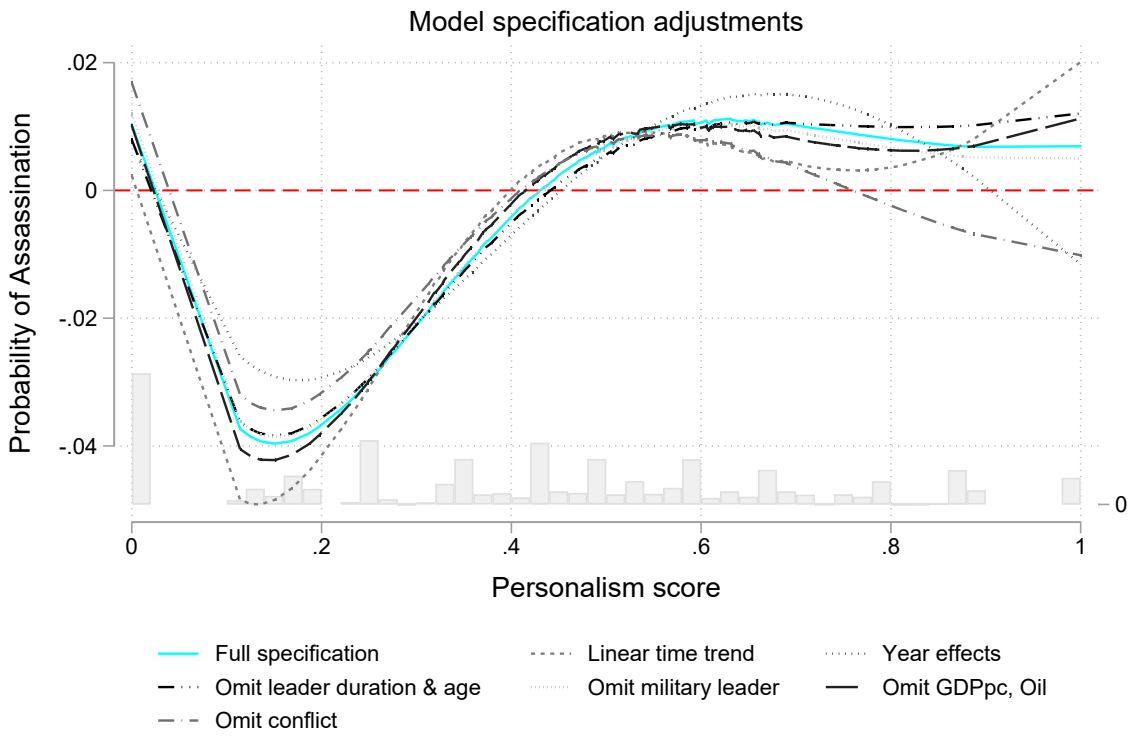

Figure E-2: Alternate specifications. Unadjusted vertical scale.

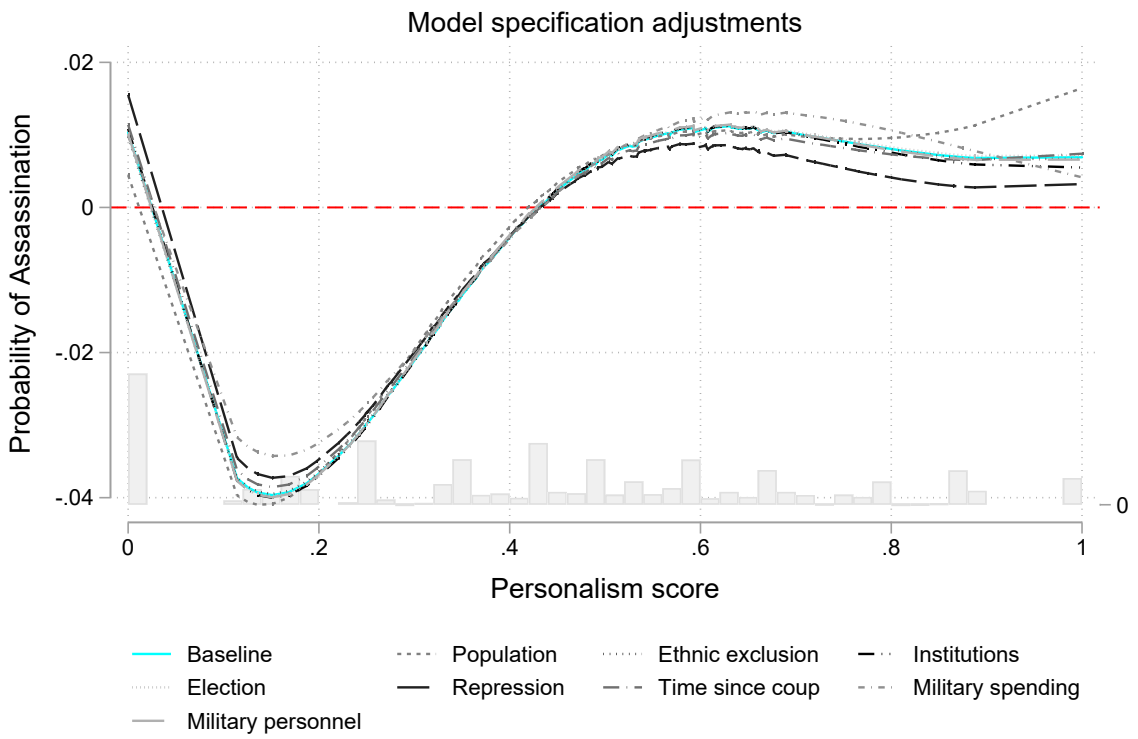

Figure E-3: Additional confounders. Unadjusted vertical scale.

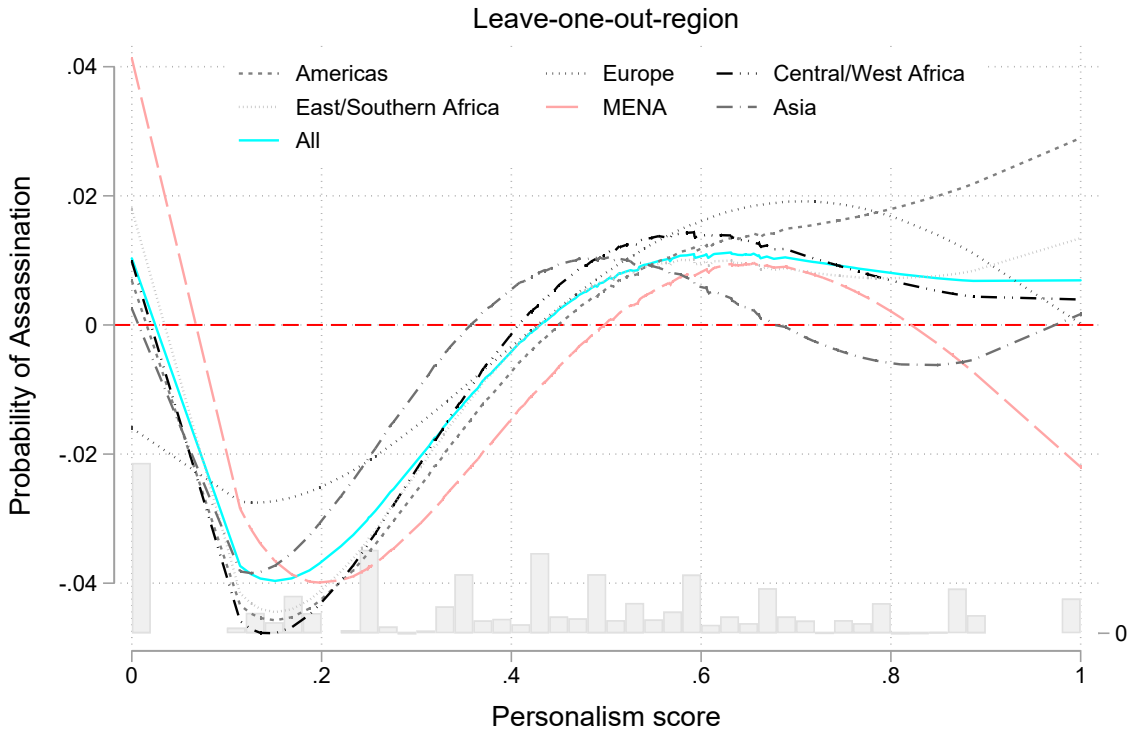

Figure E-4: Leave-one-out (loo) tests. Unadjusted vertical scale.

5.2 Regime change coups

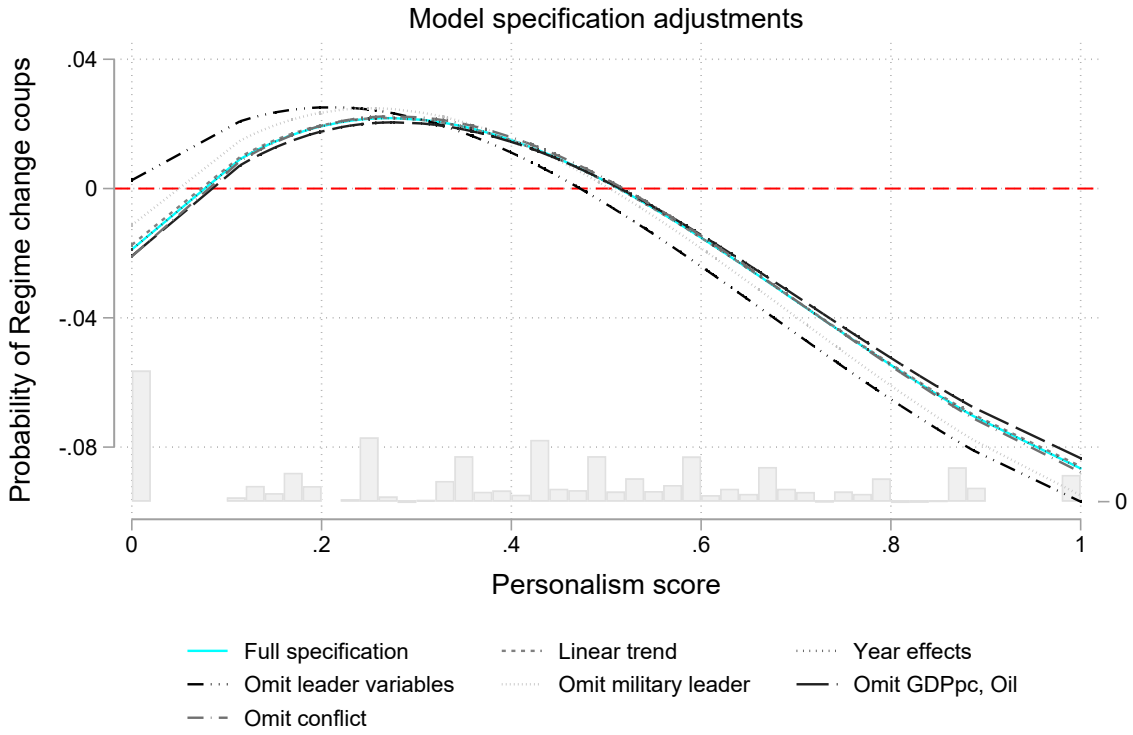

Figure E-5: Alternate specifications. Unadjusted vertical scale.

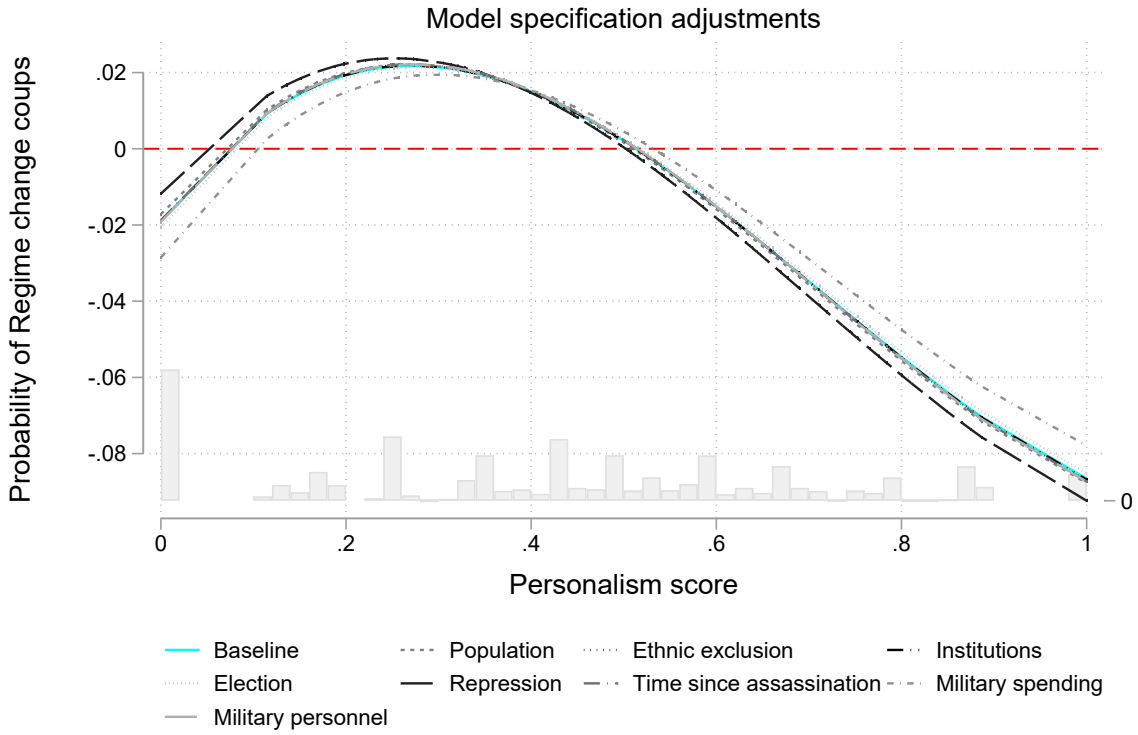

Figure E-6: Additional confounders. Unadjusted vertical scale.

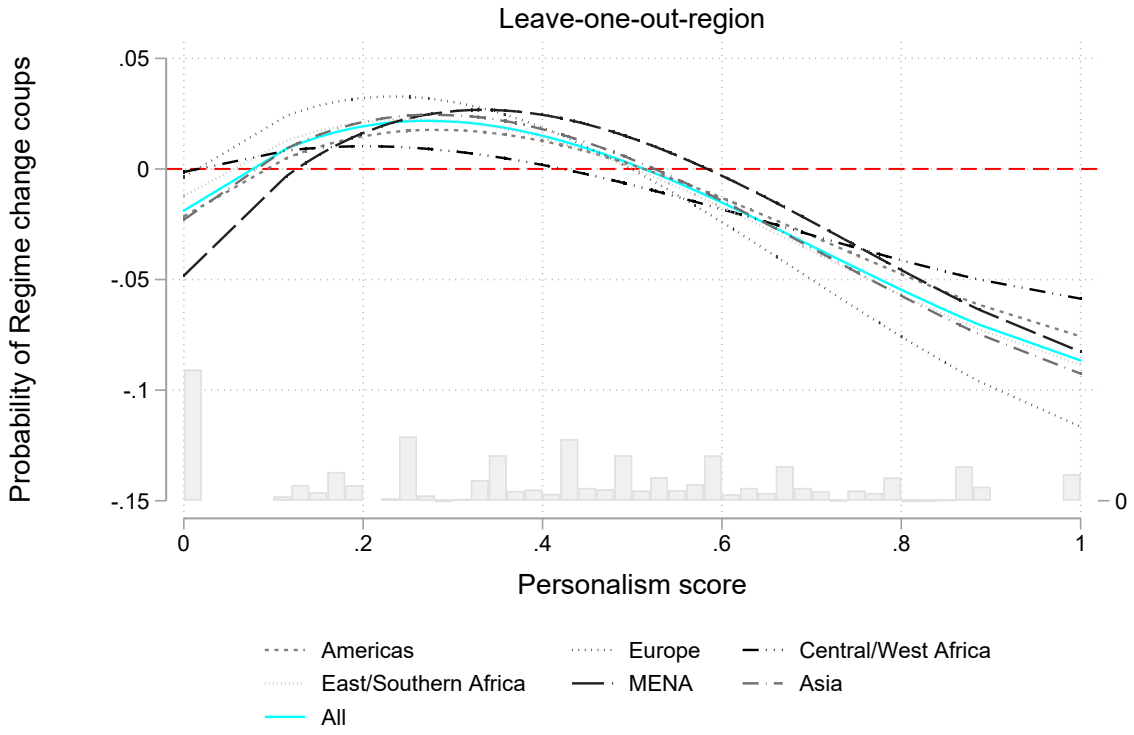

Figure E-7: Leave-one-out (loo) tests. Unadjusted vertical scale.

5.3 Leader reshuffling coups

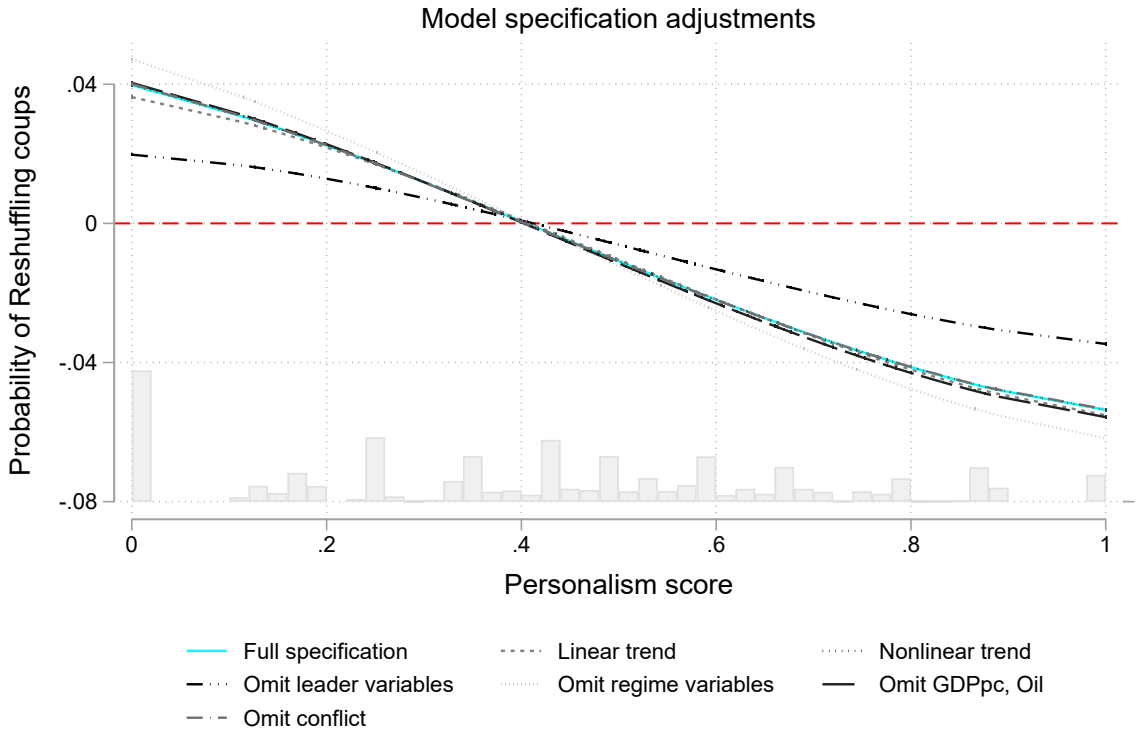

Figure E-8: Alternate specifications. Unadjusted vertical scale.

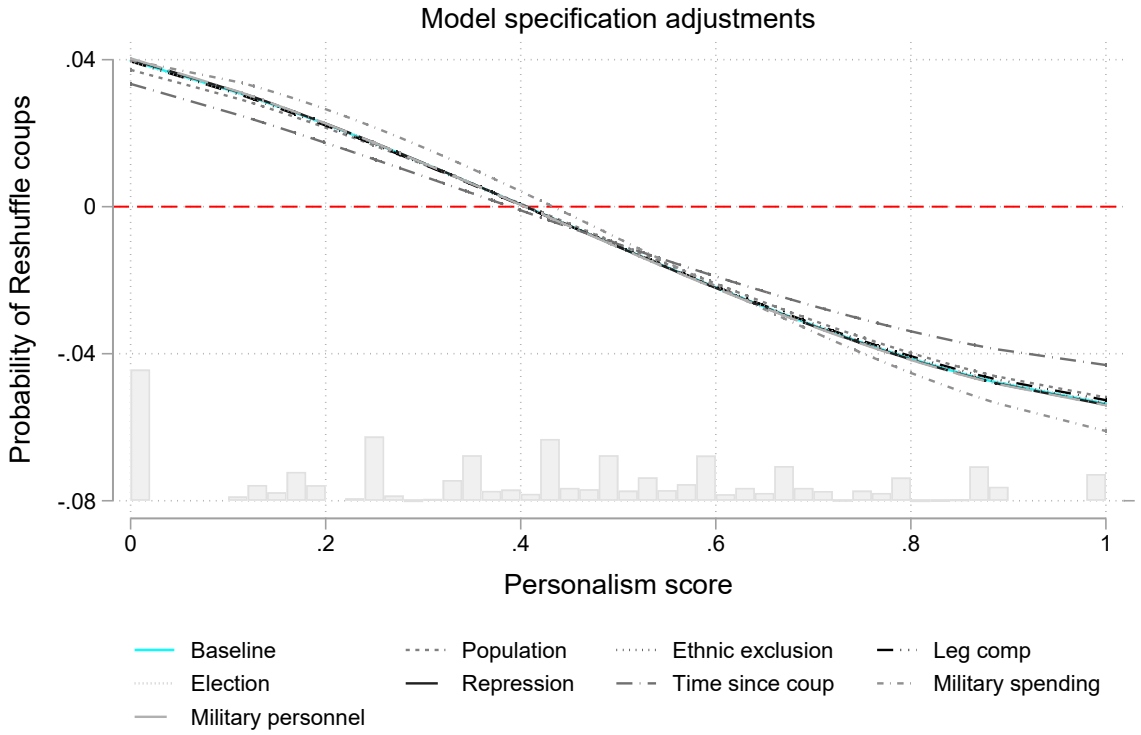

Figure E-9: Additional confounders. Unadjusted vertical scale.

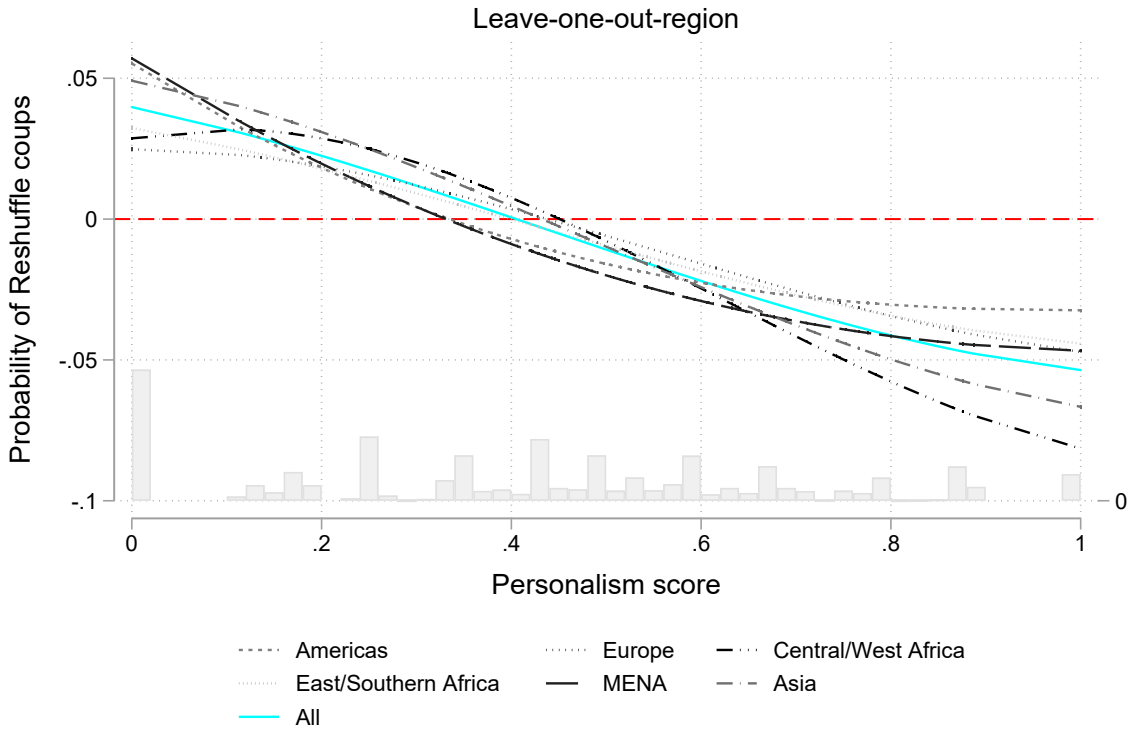

Figure E-10: Leave-one-out (loo) tests. Unadjusted vertical scale.

5.4 Dropping first year of each regime

Figure E-11 reports the results from dropping all assassination attempts during the first year of the regime, addressing concern that results at low levels of personalism are driven solely by new regimes.

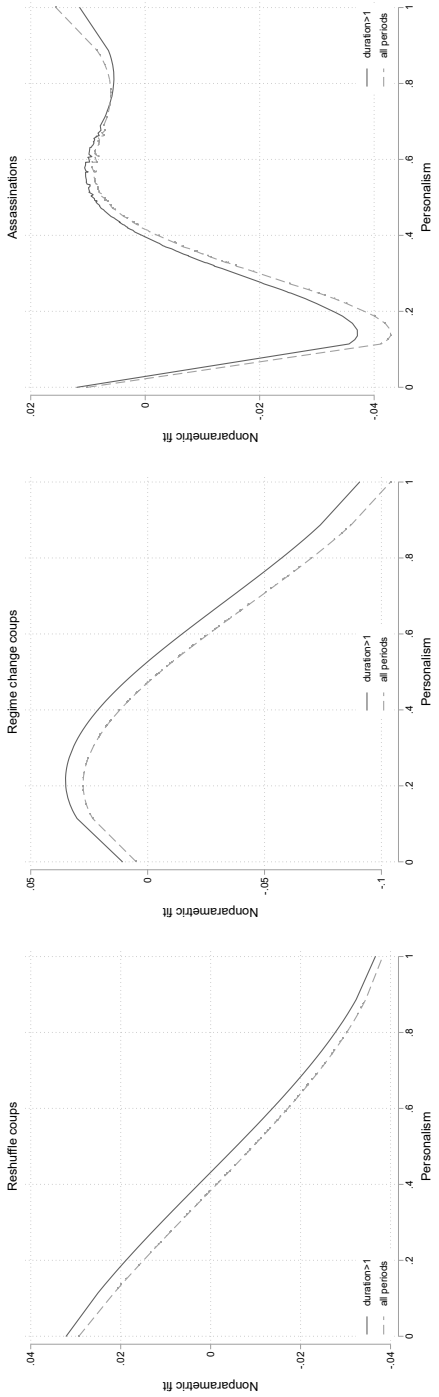

Figure E-11: Drop first year of each regime. Unadjusted vertical scale.

5.5 Semiparametric results with residuals

Figure f:e12 shows the semiparametric results for the three outcomes alongside the residuals from the semiparametric estimator. The residualized series come from linear parametric estimates and the residuals (in theory) should have a normal distribution, which means very wide tails for the two residualized series. This also means that some of the residuals will have negative values: in the end the parametric part of the model is a linear probability model, which can produce predicted values outside the (0,1) range. We therefore cannot plot the residuals on the same scale as the plot of the fit curves because the range of the residual distribution is an order of magnitude larger than the range of the fit plots. Figure E-12 plots the polynomial fit with 95 percent CI as well as the distribution of residuals from which that plot is taken, only the residuals and the fit are on different scales to facilitate visualization. Note that this 95 percent CI from the polynomial fit of the residuals is *not* the same as a 95 CI curve from a standard parameteric estimate because it only accounts for the variation in the residualized series, not covariances with errors from the covariate estimates themselves.

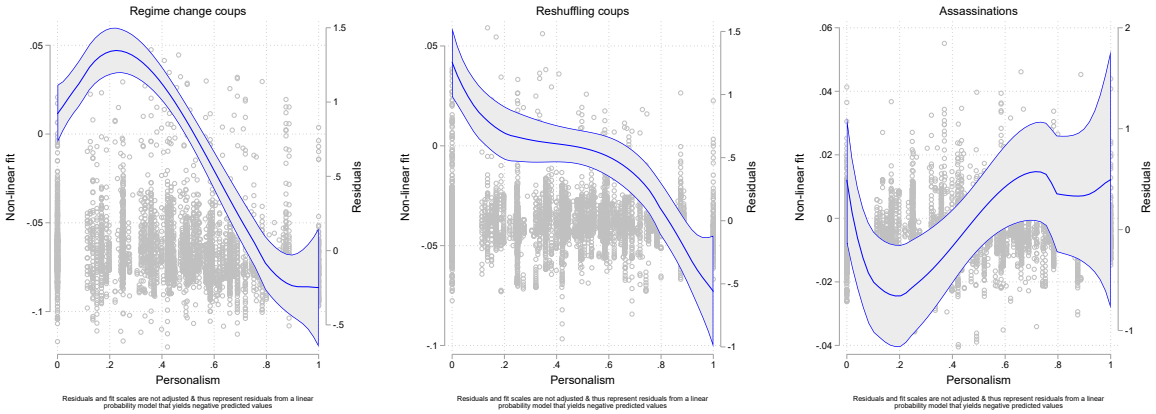

Figure E-12: Plots with residuals. Unadjusted vertical scale.

5.6 Semiparametric results by institutionalization

The section re-tests the semiparametric models using an exogenous indicator of institutionalization – an indicator of whether the first leader of the regime was a member of the military prior to the regime seizing power and the leader seized power in a successful coup. This measure of institutionalization is exogenous in the sense that it does *not* utilize information about how the leader behavior in office (i.e. some of this information is contained in the personalism measure). Instead, this indicator of a military regime only uses information from prior to the regime seizing power. This approach, used in Geddes et al. (2018), differs from measuring institutionalization of the military using the regime-type categories (e.g. Geddes et al. 2014, Weeks 2014) that contain information about behavior of the regime leader after seizing power, including information on personalism.

Figure E-13 shows the semiparametric fit result for each outcome for three groups: all observations (same pattern we've shown throughout); military; and non-military. Generally, the patterns for both sub-groups (military and non-military) are the same, with the exception of high levels of personalism for assassinations. In this case, increasing assassination probability at very high levels of personalism largerly results from military regimes. It is also worth highlighting, that reshuffling coup risk is considerably higher for military regimes, which is consistent with our arguments and findings in Kim and Kroeger (2018). As with many results reported in the Appendix, the patterns for assassinations at high levels of personalism are not consistent across sub-samples. The same appears to be true here as well.

Next, we perform a similar set of tests using a different conceptualization of 'institutionalization' based on whether the regime-backed party (if there is one) exists prior to the regime seizing power, again drawn from Geddes et al. (2018). This measure of institutionalization, as before, does not contain information about how the leader behaves after seizing power – only whether the regime had a prior party when it seized power. Figure E-14 shows these results. Again the patterns in institutionalized and uninstitutionalized regime are rather similar for coups but not for assassinations. Indeed, the main nonlinear

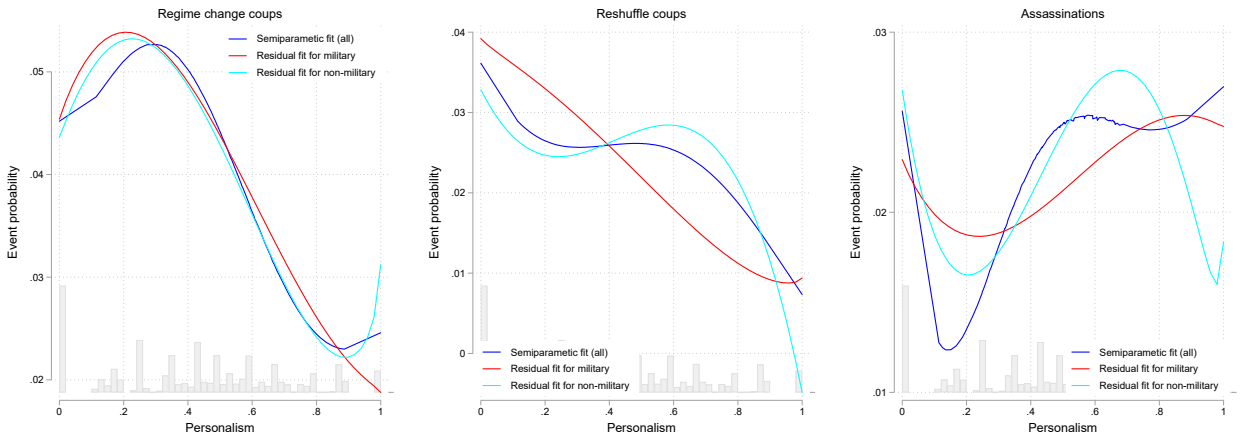

Figure E-13: Semiparametric fits by military institutionalization. Adjusted vertical scale.

pattern for assassinations draws from institutionalized – not uninstitutionalized regimes. Interestingly, at lower values of personalism for regimes with an inherited party the risk of assassination is higher, which might reflect, as we stress in the manuscript, that factions in tose contexts are weaker and not-militarized.

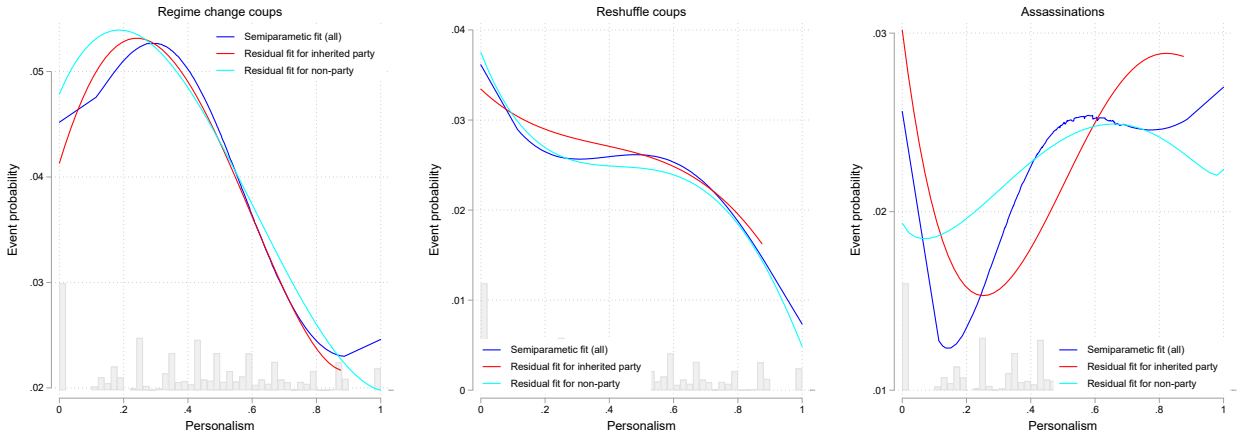

Figure E-14: Semiparametric fits by party institutionalization. Adjusted vertical scale.

5.7 Addressing mis-specification bias

Beiser-McGrath and Beiser-McGrath (2020) worry that, without specifying nonlinearities in covariates, the estimates for nonlinear marginal effects of a variable of interest may be biased. This is a form of omitted variable bias. We address this concern by including nonlinear parameterizations of covariates (that are not binary) in the estimating equation; thus any $x_{i,t}$ that is continuous enters the equation as xi, t and $x^2_{i,t}$.[46]

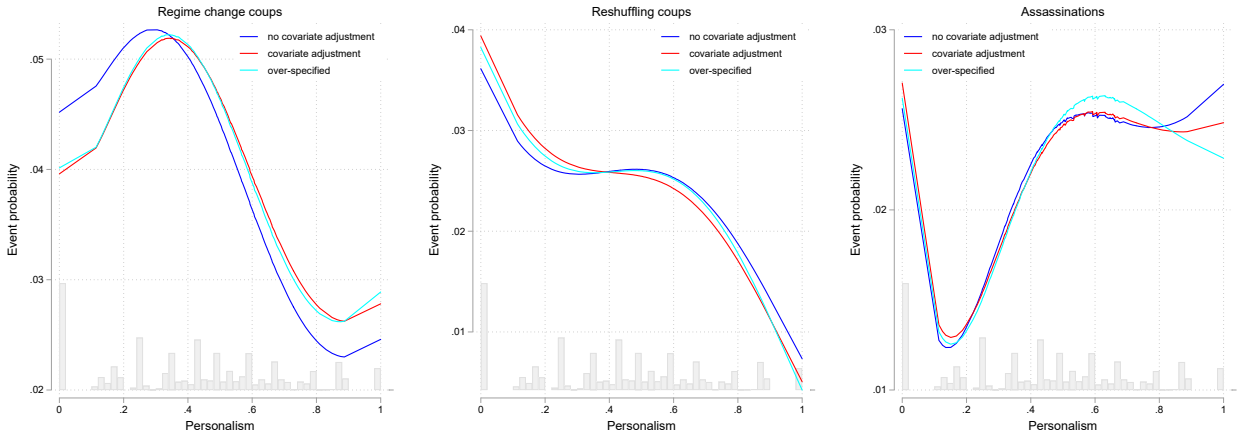

Figure E-15: Results with over-specified equation. Adjusted vertical scale.

For each outcome, Figure E-15 shows the results for three specifications: no covariates, covariates, and over-specified that includes covariates and squares of all continuous covariates. We find that changing the specification to add nonlinear parameterizations of covariates makes little difference from the results.

46. Recall that $x_{i,t}$ includes a nonlinear specification of time since last event (in cubic polynomial form, or $c_{i,t} + c^2_{i,t} + c^3_{i,t}$). Further, three covariates (civil conflict, international conflict, and military leader) are binary; so we do not include nonlinear specifications for these. There are four continuous variables that enter the equation as covariates: GDP per capita (log); oil rents (log); leader tenure (log); and leader age. By using log transformations for three of these variables, we are already specifying a nonlinear parameter (in logs). Nonetheless in robustness tests we include the squared term of each of these four continuous variables in $x_{i,t}$.

6 Appendix F: A dynamic model

We start by revisiting the semi-parametric approach. We write the model specification in equation (1) in the main text using the notation for a panel fixed effect, α_i.[47] The test produces an estimate of $f(\cdot)$ that conditions on this effect as well as a parametric (i.e. linear) model of the covariates $x_{i,t}$. Another way of thinking about α_i is that it represents the panel average of all explanatory variables. Setting aside $f(\cdot)$ for a moment, we could replace α_i with $\bar{x_{i,t}}$ and produce the same results for the estimate of β. The interpretation of marginal effects (β in a normal additive parametric linear model) is the effect of a change of $x_{i,t}$ (within a panel) from the panel average. In this sense, the estimator is dynamic because it estimates the marginal effect of within-panel variation (i.e. change over time in the level within a regime). Thus, we are discussing, theoretically, a dynamic (i.e. not a static) process; and with a fixed effects estimator we are estimating marginal effects that capture changes over time within panels.

Next, consider a standard *dynamic* panel model with panel fixed effects:

$$y_{i,t} = y_{i,t-1} + x_{i,t}\theta + \alpha_i + \varepsilon_{i,t} \tag{F-1}$$

In equation 1, $y_{i,t-1}$ is the lagged outcome and α_i are the panel fixed effects.[48] In our application, the lagged outcome ($y_{i,t-1}$) is information about past observations of the outcome event (coup or assassination). But this information is already included in all of the specifications because we adjust for the years since the last event (cubic polynomial) in all specifications (Carter and Signorino 2010). A cubic polynomial of time since last

47. Here we note that the panel unit is regime-case, which is the consecutive years in power for a particular autocratic regime. Autocratic regimes, as we use the term, are not simply authoritarian spells (interrupted by democratic spells) but rather are periods when a particular autocracy rules. In Iran, e.g., there are two post-1945 'regimes': the Shah's regime that ended in 1979 and the theocratic regime that continues to rule today (1979-2021). The panel fixed effects are therefore not country fixed effects but regime-case fixed effects. Finally 'regimes' as we use the term to denote panel units are *not* 'regime types' (i.e. static personalist or military regimes used by Geddes (1999) and Geddes et al. 2014).

48. For this illustration we just include a one-year lag of the outcome variable. In practice, the specification could include longer lags, depending on the error structure. This model may produce biased estimates because differencing to account for α_i produces a correlation between the differenced lag and the differenced error term (Arellano and Bond 1991).

event (c) will always have a positive value for any $y_{t-1} = 0$ and the value of 0 when $y_{t-1} = 1$. This means that all estimates of β adjust not only for the lagged value of $y_{i,t}$ (i.e. whether the event occurred the prior period) but also on a function of how long the lagged value of the outcome has been zero. This type of specification for a binary event model mimics parametric survival models that condition estimates on past observations (or time since last event) of the event (Beck, Katz, and Tucker 1998). With panel fixed effects, we thus have both a fixed effect (α_i) and information on $y_{i,t-1}$ on the right-hand-side of the equation; that is, we have both components of a dynamic panel model in the semi-parametric estimator we use in this application.

Now consider the equation we estimate, where $x_{i,t}$ includes time since last event (or lagged information about the outcome) in cubic polynomial form (Carter and Signorino 2010):[49]

$$y_{i,t} = x_{i,t}\theta + f(z_{i,t}) + \alpha_i + \varepsilon_{i,t} \tag{F-2}$$

Recall that $x_{i,t}\theta$ will yield standard linear parametric estimates while $f(z_{i,t})$ is the non-parametric part of the estimator; in our application $z_{i,t}$ is personalism. In practice, we use the BL estimator, which eliminates panel fixed effects (α_i) by differencing (Libois and Verardi 2013, 330):

$$y_{i,t} - y_{i,t-1} = (x_{i,t} - x_{i,t-1})\theta + (f(z_{i,t}) - f(z_{i,t0})) + (\varepsilon_{i,t} - \varepsilon_{i,t-1}) \tag{F-3}$$

Equation 2 is thus estimated as a differenced equation in 3; and we note that $x_{i,t}$ contains information on past history of events (time since last event in cubic polynomial form). Therefore, the interpretation of the marginal effects estimates result from a dynamic process.

49. In writing this equation in the main text, we do not separate out the information in the cubic polynomial of time since last event (i.e. information on $y_{i,t-1}$ as well as prior iterations of $y_{i,t-n}$) from the notation of $x_{i,t}$. But, we could write the equation as: $y_{i,t} = \lambda_1 c_{i,t} + \lambda_2 c_{i,t}^2 + \lambda_3 c_{i,t}^3 + x_{i,t}\theta + f(z_{i,t}) + \alpha_i + \varepsilon_{i,t}$, where $c_{i,t} + c_{i,t}^2 + c_{i,t}^3$ is the polynomial of time since last event, which subsumes information on y_{t-1}, and $x_{i,t}$ are covariates added linearly to the equation.

7 Appendix G: Comparison of personalism measures

In this appendix, we compare three measure of personalism from: Weeks (2014), Gandhi and Sumner (2020), and Wright (2021). This latter measure is the data we use in this paper and it is used by Geddes et al. (2018). We refer to it as the GWF data.

Figure G-1 shows how the three personalism measures vary over time for twelve cases, rescaling all three measures of personalism so the minimum value in `0` and maximum is `1`. We chose these cases to illustrate that alternative measures of personalism are not measuring what we aim to theorize, namely the rise (and sometimes) fall of personalism over time within the lifetime of autocratic regimes and leaders. In each of these plots, we can see that the GWF measure of personalism captures rising personalism for specific dictators – variation that is not captured well by other extant measures that tend to be more static.

First, we note that in almost all cases, the Weeks (2014) measure simply does not vary over time within regime-spells.[50] In this sense, it is a static measure of personalism – one that captures the overall level of personalism for a regime – that is similar to the initial static regime-type coding from Geddes (1999) and Geddes et al. (2014). The initial process of consolidating power (i.e. personalization) by dictators such as Mao Zedong, Joseph Mobutu, Muammar Qaddafi, and Kim Il-sung is simply absent in the Weeks (2014) measure even though this measure tracks fairly closely with Geddes (1999) and Geddes et al. (2014) (not shown). That is, the Weeks (2014) measure indicates that the initial years of rule for leaders such as Mao, Mobutu, Qaddafi, and Kim are all highly personalist – indeed just as personalist these leaders were in their later years. This means that the Weeks (2014) measure simply misses the dynamic process of personalization that we theorize.

Second, while there is more variation over time in the Gandhi and Sumner (2020) (G-S) measure, it too does not pick up this initial process of power consolidation in many

50. However, similar to the Geddes et al. (2018) data, the Weeks (2014) measure shows declining personalism in China after the death of Mao.

cases. In one of these twelve cases – Qaddafi in Libya (1970s) – we do see a similar pattern increasing of personalism for both the G-S and GWF measures in the first years of leaders' time in power. But in the other 11 cases, the G-S data do not pick up rising personalism for: Mao (China, from mid-1950s to 1968); Ngouabi (Republic of Congo, from 1969 to 1973); Sassou-Nguesso (Republic of Congo, 1979-1985); Qasim (19559 to 1963), Al-Bakr/Hussein (Iraq, 1970s to early 1980s), Kim (North Korea, 1950 to 1969); Torrijos (Panama, 1970s); Stroessner (Paraguay, from 1955 to 1967); Stevens (Sierra Leone, from 1968 to 1972); Eyadema (Togo, from 1964 to 1979); Ben Ali (Tunisia, from 1987 to 1989); Museveni (Uganda, from 1988 to 2004); and Le Duan (Vietnam, from 1976 to 1980).

Further, as the patterns for the Geddes et al. (2018) data illustrate, this measure of personalism allows us to think about personalism in regimes that prior data sets (e.g. Geddes 1999 and Geddes et al. 2014) categorize as single-party regimes, such as China, Tunisia, and Vietnam.

Indeed, we find that the Weeks (2014) data on personalism is highly correlated overall with the Geddes et al. (2018) measure (0.59). But when we isolate the within-regime variation we model, this correlation drops in half, to only 0.27. Further, 37 percent of the variation in the Geddes et al. (2018) measure is within-regime. By comparison, within-regime variation in the Weeks (2014) data is only 19 percent of total variation, again about half the size of the within-variation in the Geddes et al. (2018) measure. Both in aggregate and when looking at specific cases, this analysis thus shows that the Weeks' measure misses the relevant process of power consolidation that we theorize in this paper.

Measure	Overall ρ with GWF 2018	Within-regime ρ with GWF 2018	Within-regime share of total variation
Weeks' (2012)	0.59	0.27	0.19
Gandhi-Sumner (2020)	0.10	0.10	0.29
GWF (2014)	0.39	.	0

The G-S data, on the other hand are not very highly correlated with the Geddes et al. (2018) measure – either overall or within-regime. The share of variation in the G-S

measure that is within-regime is higher (0.29) than in the Weeks' measure (0.19) but some of this within-variation is simply a product of the dynamic latent model G-S employ to estimate personalism.[51]

Finally, we note that the Geddes et al. (2018) data is correlated with the Geddes et al. (2014) personalist regime type category at 0.39 but, by construction, the Geddes et al. (2014) categories do not vary over time within regimes.

Figure G-1 illustrates different personalism levels among the GWF, the Gandhi-Sumner, and the Weeks measures. The GWF and the Gandhi-Sumner measures (the blue and red lines, respectively) vary within leaders while the Weeks measure (the cyan line) does not vary within leaders and also does not extend beyond 2008. The GWF measure incorporates the leader's ability to control and appoint high-ranking members of the security forces including the military, the ruling party, and other cabinet-level offices. It also includes information on whether security forces and ruling parties are newly created by the dictator rather than inherited. Similarly, the Gandhi-Sumner measure gathers information on the dictator's freedom from military and party constraints, as well as the control over political offices. The Weeks measure asks eight questions related to a dictator's personal power including control of the military, ruling party effectiveness, and promotion of personal loyalists to high offices. She then constructs the personalism index by computing a ratio of the number of "yes" answers out of the total number of questions, assuming that each item carries an equal weight. The Weeks measure, contrary to the previous two, shows considerably less variation within the leader.

51. The dynamic latent model, which can be helpful when the items have substantial missing data, uses the prior time period's estimate of θ, the latent trait, as a starting point for estimating the current time period's θ, which smooths estimates over time. The Geddes et al. (2018) and Wright (2021) latent model, in contrast, is static – but uses time-varying information – and thus produces estimates that appear as step-like changes over time. That is, the Geddes et al. (2018) approach does not smooth estimates over time, in part, because there is no missing data in the manifest items. See Reuning, Kenwick, and Fariss (2019) for a dynamic latent model that falls somewhere between the dynamic latent approach in G-S and the static latent model in Geddes et al. (2018).

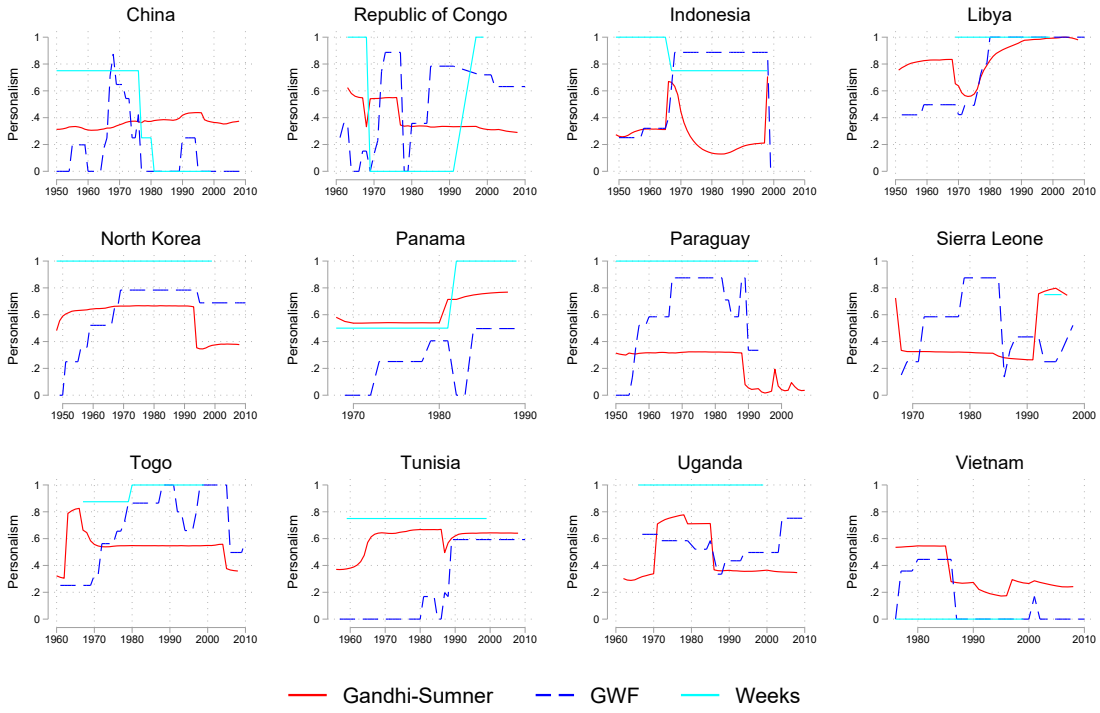

Figure G-1: Comparison Among Different Personalism Measures

- Starting with **China**, the GWF measure illustrates Mao's increasing personal power during the Cultural Revolution and subsequent decline in the personalism as the power-sharing institutions and term limits are installed in the CCP regime. On the other hand, the Weeks measure correctly identifies higher personal power of Mao compared to his successors but does not differentiate variation in Mao's personal power for before, during, and after the Cultural Revolution. The Gandhi-Sumner (G-S) measure, on the other hand, shows the levels of personalism among the CCP leaders at a very similar level, with the levels of personal power for Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao higher than that for Mao. If the G-S measure does not point to Mao as having more personal power than his successors, especially during the post-Deng period up to Xi's presidency, then it is unclear what this measure is capturing.

- For **Congo**, the GWF personalism score increases in the 1970s with Ngouabi appointing military officers from the northern ethnic groups, as well as personalizing the ruling party he created, the Congolese Labour Party (PCT). He survived a failed coup attempt in 1972 and further personalized his regime by appointing himself as a defense minister in 1975. After a brief interim rule of Yhombi-Opango, Sassou-Nguesso managed to personalize the regime in the 1980s when he marginalized rival factions within the PCT in 1984. The Weeks measure does not capture the personalizations of Ngouabi and Sassou-Nguesso; the Gandhi-Sumner (G-S) measure only narrowly does for Ngouabi's personalization. Only the GWF measure captures Sassou-Nguesso's rising personalism; neither the G-S nor Weeks' data capture this.

- **Iraq** shows an increase in personalism score starting in 1957 under 'Abd al-Ilah. His attempts to install personal loyalists to the high offices and military led to a successful coup led by Colonel Kassem in 1958. Under Kassem, the targets of personalization were his co-conspirator of the coup Aref and his pro-Nasserite officers in the military. Arif plotted a failed coup attempt which led to his death sentence (but later release) in 1958 and subsequent personalization until Kassem's departure via coup in 1963. During Abd al-Salem Aref and the former's brother Abd al-Rahman Aref's relatively brief tenures from 1963 to 1968, they did not wield much personalist power because of the powerful Ba'athist prime minister Bakr. Bakr overthrew the regime in 1968 and was able to amass his personal power by defeating his rivals in the military wing an-Naif and Daud. After installing his associate Hardan al-Tikriti as a defense minister, he turned the ruling party into a rubber stamp organization by forming the National Progressive Front – a popular front organization that contained the Ba'ath Party, the Iraqi Communist Party, and the Kurdistan Revolutionary Party. Saddam Hussein's tenure began with highly personalized regime in 1979 as he solidified his position before his presidential tenure within the party through security services and executed several regime insiders with the charges of foreign espionage. Like the GWF data, the Gandhi-Sumner data portrays leaders prior to Saddam (one of the most famous highly personalized dictators) having more personal powers than him. The Weeks data correctly identifies Saddam as a highly personalist leader but fails to capture the personalization trend during the Bakr era.

- **Libya** is a case where the all three measures illustrate the personalism similarly. The personalism score decreases briefly during the early tenure of Qaddafi as he had to share the power with 12-member Revolutionary Command Council. It soon increases in Libya with Qaddafi's rule especially after September – October of 1975 when he purged the military and set up the Office for the Security of the Revolution. In 1978, he launched the Revolutionary Committees that are personally loyal to him which (along its paramilitary wing the Revolutionary Guards) have become the main control tool of the regime. Both the GWF and G-S data capture Qaddafi's rising power in the 1970s, while the Weeks' measure of personalism remains the same across the entire period.

- **North Korea**'s first leader, Kim Il-sung, steadily increased his personal power by first purging the armed forces during and after the Korean War and then moving onto the party and other civilian officials. He appointed his son Kim Jong-il as the heir and in important party positions beginning in the 1960s and sidelined his son's rivals in the 1970s. Kim Jong-il inherited a regime that is largely personalist from his father. While the GWF data closely document the various stages of Kim's rising personalist power in the 1950s and 1960s, neither of the other data sets capture this phenomenon.

- Omar Torrijos of **Panama** personalized his regime throughout the 1970s with control of the high offices, the armed forces, and creation of a new political party (the Democratic Revolutionary Party). The short-lived successive leaders Florencio Flores and Rubén Darío Paredes did not wield much personal power. Manuel Noriega,

on the other hand, came to power with strong personal control over the armed forces as he was a general. Moreover, he created the Panama Defense Forces in 1983 that transformed the Panamanian armed forces from the military police into an army. Although the Gandhi-Sumner and the Weeks measures follow a similar pattern as the GWF under Noriege, both alternative measures miss the personalization process of Torrijos and the fall in personalism during the terms of Flores and Paredes.

- Alfredo Stroessner of **Paraguay** built a highly personalist regime with the military officers being either members of the pro-Stroessner wing of the ruling Colorado Party or personal loyalists. Moreover, he incorporated the Presidential Escort Regiment that is operationally independent from rest of the military directly under his command and fully controlled the Colorado Party by 1966. In 1982 and 1984, we observe a slight decrease in Stroessner's personal power as he lost firm grip on the ruling party. His successor Andrés Rodríguez did not possess much personal power as he could not exert as much influence as Stroessner over the military and the Colorado Party during his much shorter 4-year term. The Gandhi-Sumner measure does not capture highly personalized Paraguayan military and the ruling party; the Weeks measure considers Rodríguez as personally powerful as Stroessner. More importantly, only the GWF measure documents the rise of Stroessner's power in the 1950s and 1960s.

- In **Sierra Leone**, Siaka Stevens directly controlled the security apparatus beginning in 1971 when he transitioned from the being prime minister to the president under a new republican constitution. He further personalized the regime through the 1978 constitutional referendum that turned the country into a presidential one-party state. His successors – Joseph Saidu Momoh, Valentine Strasser, and Johnny Paul Koroma – could not reach reach the same personalism level as that of Stevens since their tenures were much shorter. Both the Gandhi-Sumner and the Weeks datasets show an opposite pattern of personalism from the GWF, indicating that the three short-lived dictators enjoyed a higher level of personalism than Stevens. Again, only the GWF measure documents Stevens' rise in power.

- Gnassingbé Eyadéma ruled **Togo** until his death in 1995 by building a highly personalized regime beginning in 1969 when he founded a new party, the Rally of the Togolese People (PRT), and subjugated it as a rubber stamp organization. He gained additional personal power with the creation of paramilitary forces related to the PRT's youth wing and massively stacking his minority ethnic group, the Kabye, to the upper echelons of the military in the late 1970s. Faure Gnassingbé, Eyadéma's son, succeed the position with the support of the army. However, he had to resign and run for an election due to heavy pressures from different regions of the country. The Gandhi-Sumner measure illustrates Eyadéma's predecessor Sylvanus Olympio (who was assassinated) as a highly personalized leader while failing to capture the consolidation of power under Eyadéma. The Weeks measure only briefly covers the years from 1967 to 1999. Again, only the GWF data document the rise in power over time for Eyadéma's personalist regime.

- In **Tunisia**, Ben Ali transformed a dominant party regime into a more personalist regime after he came to power in a palace coup ousting Habib Bourguiba in 1987. Ben Ali quickly turned the ruling party into a rubber stamp and changed its name to the Democratic Constitution Rally (RCD) in early 1988. Only the GWF data capture Ben Ali's rising power in the late 1980s and show how his rule was substantially more personalist than his predecessor's.
- In **Uganda**, both Milton Obote and Idi Amin maintained personalized regimes by directly controlling the security apparatus, creating personal paramilitary, and dominating promotion and purge of military officers according to personal loyalties after each coup attempt. Yoweri Museveni, after coming to power in civil war in the mid-1980s, seized a greater control over the military and security forces in 1988 after a failed coup attempt of the same year. He further personalized the regime in 2003 by turning the ruling party National Resistance Movement into a rubber stamp and would later appoint his son as high military commander. The Gandhi-Sumner measure fails to capture the personalization of Museveni while the Weeks measure considers all Ugandan dictators as the most highly personalized as possible with the static value of 1.
- Like Libya, **Vietnam** is another case where all three measures largely agree on the personalism trend in recent decades. However, only the GWF measure captures the rising level of personalism under Le Duan in the late 1970s. Both the G-S and GWF measures show that Vietnam's level of personalism starts to decrease with the adoption *Doi Moi* reforms in 1986, after the first regime leader dies in office. The G-S measure, however, suggests a higher residual level of personalism in recent decades, whereas both GWF and Weeks suggest that Vietnam's communist single-party regime is not personalist at all.

Review of the 12 country cases indicates that the alternative indices of "personalism" either measure a different concept due to the different nature of the observable items included in their project or show very different levels of within-leader variation in personalism. Most importantly, the G-S and Weeks data largely fail to document the steady rise of personalist power for numerous dictators, which is the phenomenon we theorizes shapes the threat environment. Given this, it would be very difficult to draw meaningful conclusions from running robustness checks based on alternative measures of personalism.

8 Appendix H: Sample narratives of assassination events

A 270-page supplemental online appendix has narratives and coding justifications for all 210 candidate events that we will release upon publication. In an effort not to overburden reviewers, we simply provide a few example narratives and coding justifications in this appendix for assassination events prominent in the main text.

- # 42-1961-5-30: Dominican Republic, Rafael L. Trujillo

  Category: **successful assassination and failed regime change coup**

  Other Datasets: assassination - Jones and Olken, Iqbal and Zorn; failed military coup and foreign coup - CCD; failed coup attempt - CSP; no executive - PT; assassination - Singh; Archigos codes Trujillo as leader of the Dominican Republic from 16 August 1930 until being removed on this date through "irregular" means by domestic military actors without foreign support. However, Goemans, Gleditsch, and Chiozza (2009a, 70) also notes that the assassination by a band of military officers "could also be labeled as exit by rebel force, as the officers act by themselves and do not make use of the units they command"; Svolik codes Trujillo's exit on this date as an assassination; GWF code a personal regime (Dominican Rep 30-62) from 1930 until January 16, 1962, which was led by Trujillo until this date. O'Rourke (2013, 306) lists Rafael Trujillo as the target of a successful U.S-backed coup in 1961. EPR codes ethnicity as irrelevant in Dominican Republic since 1946 with the entire population being "Dominican".

  Event: On Tuesday, May 30, 1961, seven men ambushed longtime dictator Rafael Trujillo on a dark highway, blocked his car, and engaged in an exchange of fire which left "El Jefe" dead. On June 2, the government identified the seven assassins: First Lieut. Amado García Guerrero, on active duty with the Presidential Aide de Camp; Huáscar Antonio Tejeda Pimentel, a civilian engineer; Pedro Livio Cedeño, a former army captain; Roberto Pastoriza, a civilian engineer; Antonio de la Maza Vasquez;

Luis Salvador Estrella Sadalha, son of Gen. Pedro Estrella and brother of Brig. Gen. Guarionex Estrella; and Antonio Imbert Barreras (New York Times 1961a; Brewer 1961b).[52]

The leader of the "Political Group" in the plot, although not part of the ambush, was Brig. Gen. Juan Tomás Díaz, who was allegedly motivated by revenge at his forced retirement the previous year (Khiss 1961b). Trujillo's slain body was later found in the garage at Gen. Díaz's house (Kihss 1961). On June 8, Pedro Livio, while in custody, issued a statement that the plotters intended to kidnap and force Trujillo's resignation, saying the shooting only began after Trujillo defended himself. According to Livio, the plotters intended to install a General "X", not identifying him but saying only it was not Tomás Díaz (Brewer 1961g). However, by that time, Pedro Livio, Huáscar Tejeda, and Modesto Díaz had all told authorities that Maj. Gen. José "Pupo" René Román was involved (Diederich 1990, 142,175). On June 8, Gen. Román was quietly dismissed as Secretary of State for the Armed Forces (Brewer 1961f), which had placed him as next in constitutional line for the presidency. On June 11, Román allegedly confessed to complicity in the assassination (Brewer 1961d). On June 17, Román was court martialled for plotting to seize the government (Diederich 1990, 233). By July, Pupo had been sentenced to 30 years in prison (Associated Press 1961). On August 3, an additional 29 civilians were charged with plotting to overthrow the government (Diederich 1990, 218).

Coding rationale: Powell-Thyne exclude Trujillo's assassination as a coup attempt because Rafael Trujillo was not then the nominal executive of the Dominican Republic. At the time of Trujillo's assassination, the President was Joaquín Balaguer, who had been promoted from Vice President in August 1960. Balaguer had re-

52. On June 2, García Guerrero was killed resisting arrest. On June 4, Gen. Tomas Díaz and Antonio de la Maza were also killed resisting arrest (Brewer 1961c). On November 18, on the orders of Ramfis Trujillo in one of his last acts before leaving the country, four of the surviving assassins in prison were killed: Roberto Pastoriza, Pedro Livio Cedeña, Huáscar Tejeda, and Salvador Estrella. Two other accomplices, Luis Manuel Cáceres Michel and Modesto E. Díaz Quezada, were also assassinated in custody (New York Times 1961a, 1961b; Berrellez 1961). Antonio Imbert survived by hiding at the Italian consul in Santo Domingo for six months (BBC 2011).

placed Gen. Hector Bienvenido Trujillo, brother of the longtime dictator, "to carry out a program of asserted democratization at a time when the regime was being threatened with sanctions by the Organization of American States" (OAS) (Khiss 1961b). At this point, Balaguer was nominal executive and a figurehead. Even after Trujillo's death, "'Trujillismo' remained alive and well as members of his family, such as son Ramfis, continued to call the shots in Santo Domingo" (Crandall 2006, 48). Thus, we concur with Archigos that Trujillo was regime leader at this time.

However, we disagree with the Archigos coding of no foreign support for Trujillo's assassination. In fact, the United States was implicated in it. The U.S. began distancing itself from Trujillo following the Cuban revolution and instead began supporting social democratic reformers such as Venezuelan president Rómulo Betancourt. On January 3, 1961, President Eisenhower ordered U.S. support for action to rid the Dominican Republic of Trujillo (Rabe 1999, 36). Trujillo's botched 1960 assassination attempt against Betancourt also led President Kennedy to support OAS sanctions against Trujillo (Crandall 2006, 47-48) and Eisenhower's proposed anti-Trujillo covert operations. As a result, in early 1961, the U.S. Consul General Henry Dearborn passed pistols and carbines to Dominican dissidents. After hesitating due to the Bay of Pigs in April 1961, in a secret memo dated May 29, 1961, Kennedy authorized a plan to assist in Trujillo's removal (even if not assassination). When Trujillo was killed the next day, the assassins had used the CIA-supplied guns (Rabe 1999, 36-39). U.S. support, however ambiguous, suggests that the plot sought to cause regime change by removing the dictator and prevent a familial succession.

Finally, we agree with Archigos' interpretation of this assassination as part of a military coup attempt, rather than simply being an "unsupported" assassination. Most of the ambushers were civilians or non-active military members. One of the coup leaders, Gen. Juan Tomas Díaz, retired early in September 1960 (Diederich

1990, 59).[53] Antonio Imbert, a concrete factory manager and the former governor of Puerto Plata, was given an honorary rank of general only in 1962 *after* the Trujillo regime's demise as a reward so that he could draw a state pension (BBC 2011). Pedro Livio Cedeño had been discharged from the army in 1946 (Diederich 1990, 78). Antonio de la Maza had left the Corps of Military Aides as a lieutenant in 1943 (25), and in 1959 he was made "an honorary major in the Foreign Legion" for constructing barracks on a Trujillo contract (28). Had they acted alone, we would not code any active military participation. However, two of the known plotters were active military members, namely Lt. Amado García Guerrero and Maj. Gen. Pupo Román (Brewer 1961a). Even though Gen. Román did not overtly carry out a coup as planned on the night of May 30, Amado García took concrete actions to oust and replace Trujillo.

The next question concerns whether the assassins and coup plotters sought regime change. On the one hand, most of the plotters had personal grievances against the dictator, which would suggest more of a revenge motive than any political program (Rabe 1999, 39).[54] The plotters were mainly conservative, anti-communist, and bound together by familial ties. " Above all they wanted to beat the leftists to the punch" to replace the aging dictator (Diederich 1990, 63). On the other hand, their grievances stemmed from the concentration of power within the Trujillo family, and the plotters evidently sought to prevent a father-son succession to Ramfis. The coup plan, as developed by Modesto Diaz, was as follows: "Once Trujillo is dead, Pupo Román and Juan Tomás Díaz will head a civilian-military junta with Antonia de la Maza as secretary of the armed forces; all members of the Trujillo

53. On June 3, Ramfis Trujillo, the dictator's son, denied that there had been any armed forces involved in the plot, saying that it was "impossible" that Gen. Díaz had hoped to overthrow the regime because he had no following in the military (Brewer 1961e; Ediger 1961). This is precisely the reason the plotters recruited Gen. Pupo Román.

54. Two brothers of slain Octavio de la Maza, for example, were implicated in the plot. "The de la Maza family is reported to have been bitter over the regime's contention that Octavio had killed Gerald Lester Murphy, an American pilot, and had then hanged himself in a prison cell. Murphy has been believed by United States Government quarters to have been involved in the disappearance in March, 1956, of Dr. Jesus Maria de la Galendize, a Trujillo enemy then living in New York" (Khiss 1961a).

family will be arrested. Some will be permitted to leave and others will be brought to justice...President Balaguer will be taken to the National Palace where he will be obliged to sign the decrees establishing the junta" (Diederich 1990, 173). Balaguer would continue as a puppet president until elections were held in 1962 (62).

Gen. "Pupo" Román Fernandez's conditional acceptance in February 1961 to lead the coup, if the assassins brought him Trujillo's corpse, "elevated the conspiracy from a personal vendetta to a coup d'état" (62). Of all of the conspirators, Román was the only regime insider. As secretary of the armed forces, he could direct troops. He was also the husband of Trujillo's niece Mireya (30), making him an in-law but not a blood relative. Also, Pupo "was no friend" of Ramfis Trujillo, fearing that if Ramfis succeeded his father he would "end up at the bottom of the ladder again". Earlier in 1960, Trujillo had promoted Pupo to armed forces secretary over Ramfis' friend Gen. Tunti Sanchez, prompting Ramfis to leave the country in protest (66). Pupo would not have supported Ramfis' return to the Dominican Republic to take power. However, on the night Trujillo was killed, the "Action Group" was never able to show Pupo the body. In the first moments when Pupo learned an attack had occurred, he was in the presence of General Arturo Espaillat, the first head of the SIM, and Pupo was powerless to communicate with anyone in private to instigate the coup plan (136). Pupo soon called President Balaguer and Hector Trujillo, *El Jefe's* brother, and requested they come to conference with him at his headquarters at the 18th of December base. They demurred, and fearing a trap Johnney Abbés, the de facto SIM chief, ordered SIM agents not to let them go (140-141). Pupo also called his brother-in-law Virgilio Garcia Trujillo, commander of the San Isidro air base, and ordered him to dispatch tanks and troops to the 18th of December base. He also refused on the advice of another brother-in-law that Trujillo might not be dead but trying to find out who his real friends were. With this "feeble bid" to rally troops and take Balaguer and Hector Trujillo prisoner, Pupo quickly and "prudently changed back to his role as a loyal member of the Trujillo family and

military commander and displayed more initiative in tracking down Trujillo's body and assassins" (Diederich 1990, 138).

Based on the evidence, we assume the plotters sought to prevent personalization of the regime. Thus, we code this as a failed regime change coup; it succeeded in killing Trujillo (an assassination) but did not lead to his replacement or the collapse of his regime at this time as intended. For more on this case, see the book-length treatment by Diederich (1990). Also, we consider the assassination against Trujillo by the "Action Group" as the first stage of the planned coup attempt, and the failure Román and the "Political Group" to act to seize power the unrealized second stage of the coup attempt. However, one could also reasonably argue that the assassination was a *prerequite* for the start of the actual coup attempt to be led by Gen. Román. On May 31, when it was officially announced that Trujillo was dead, "There was no call to arms, no communiqué from a civil or military junta declaring finis to the Trujillo era" (173). Thus, one could argue that this was a successful assassination and aborted coup plot rather than an executed coup attempt. For a profile of assassin Juan Thomas Diaz, see Fetherling (2001, 119-120). AMBIGUOUS.

- # 732-1979-10-26: South Korea, Park Chung Hee

  Category: **successful assassination**

  Other Datasets: assassination - Jones and Olken, Iqbal and Zorn, Svolik, csp, PT, CWC; Archigos codes Hee Park as exiting on this date through "irregular" means by other government actors without foreign support; Svolik codes Park as being assassinated on this date with military participation; GWF code a military regime (Korea South 61-87) from May 16, 1961, until February 25, 1988.

  Event: On October 26, 1979, Director of the KCIA Kim Jae Kyu (or Chae-gyu) was having dinner with President Park Chung Hee and his bodyguard Cha Chi Cheol at a KCIA safe house. "At some point an argument broke out. Kim Chae-gyu drew his

pistol, exclaimed, "How can we conduct our policies with an insect like this?" and shot Cha, who tried to crawl out of the room to mobilize his guard detail" (Cumings 2005, 379). Kim's actions appear to have been "hastily improvised" since the first pistol he used "had not been used for a long time and misfired" (Oberdorfer and Carlin 2013, 90-91). Using a second gun, "Kim also shot and killed Park Chung Hee. Pandemonium broke out among the power elite in the security services" (Cumings 2005, 379).

Kim "had not devised a serious plan for taking over the government" after the assassination. "Immediately after the killings, Kim Jae Kyu met Army Chief of Staff Chung Seung Hwa and tried to persuade him to go to KCIA headquarters and declare martial law, although the assassin did not disclose that he had killed the president. Instead, Chung convened a meeting at Korean army headquarters, in which Kim participated–again without disclosing his role in the president's death. The truth came out several hours later when the other surviving principal from the fatal dinner, the chief of the Blue House secretariat, Kim Kye Won, finally turned up. At that point, the KCIA chief-turned-assassin was arrested (Oberdorfer and Carlin 2013, 90-91) on General Chung Seung Hwa's orders (Cumings 2005, 379). An emergency cabinet meeting was held, naming "Prime Minister Choi Kyu Ha, a soft-spoken former diplomat, acting president, as specified in Park's *yushin* law constitution. With American concurrence, martial law was declared over most of the country, and Army Chief of Staff Chung was named martial-law commander" (Oberdorfer and Carlin 2013, 91).

Kim Jae Kyu was put on trial eventually "found guilty of murder and executed, along with his aides who had killed the president's bodyguards" (91). Kim's motives were never fully established, and some call the assassination "inexplicable" (Cumings 2005, 379). At the time, Kim was considered an intimate friend of the president, which is why Kim had been selected in 1976 to head the KCIA, "the most sensitive instrument of Park's personal control" (Oberdorfer and Carlin 2013, 91). Indeed,

Kim's personal relationship with Park predated Park's successful coup attempt in 1961 as they belonged to the same graduation class in the military academy and served in the same division (Kim 1973, Cumings 2005, 363-364). "Like a number of other senior officers and officials, however, Kim felt increasingly alienated from Park's policies" (Oberdorfer and Carlin 2013, 90-91). Park had rapidly personalized his regime after 1972 by revising the constitution to abolish popular voting and term limits for the presidency (Kim 1973, Cumings 2005, 363-364). By 1979, Park had successfully constructed a power structure that pitted powerful security elites against each other (mainly between the KCIA Director Kim and the Presidential Security Service Chief Cha Ji Cheol, and to certain extent against the Defense Security Commander Chun Doo Hwan) and installing an unofficial clique within the military (*Hanahoe*) where its officers were personally loyal to Park and were given crucial positions that made coup attempts difficult (Roehrig 2002, 151, Cumings 2005, 378-381,385).[55]

At his trial, Kim "told the court he had decided to kill Park years earlier in order to end the dictatorial *yushin* system, and claimed that his objective was a "revolution for the restoration of democracy"" (Oberdorfer and Carlin 2013, 90). According to Kim, he had made multiple earlier attempts to "soften up" Park, such as recommending him to re-institute popular election of the presidency and replacing harsh presidential decrees with milder ones (Shindonga 1996; Ahn 2005). By 1979, agitation by a pro-democracy movement and opposition party were growing. On October 16, 1979, mass democracy protests broke out against the regime in South Korea's second largest city, Busan. As the intelligence chief, Kim concluded that a riot at first led by college students grew into a popular uprising joined by "ordinary people" and recommended Park to take a soft approach. On the other hand, Park

55. Its group leader Chun Doo Hwan became the next leader in 1980 after a successful military rebellion as *Hanahoe* members commanded units that are essential for coup prevention, such as the Defense Security Command for monitoring the military communications and combat units that are stationed close to Seoul (e.g. 9th Infantry Division, 20th Mechanized Infantry Division, 1st, 3rd, and 5th Airborne Special Forces Brigades) (Katz 1992, 314-316).

was much more adamant and declared that he would personally give the order to shoot protesters if need be.[56] Around this time, only a few weeks prior to when he acted, Kim decided to kill Park "at his first opportunity," says Kang Sin Ok on the basis of conversations with Kim's lawyer. Meanwhile, "There had been rumors that Kim would soon be ousted from his job by the dissatisfied president, giving rise to the theory that he had acted in part from fear of dismissal or worse" (Oberdorfer and Carlin 2013, 90-91).

Coding rationale: Aksoy et al. (2015) code Park as being killed by a regime insider (a military intelligence officer). Although we cannot be sure the exact reason why Kim assassinated Park, Kim's statements during his trial suggests that killing the leader was the only way to end the regime and he had felt that he was increasingly being sidelined by the regime hardliners (Shindonga 1996). We can find no evidence that Kim Jae Kyu orchestrated the assassination plot as part of an attempt to seize power for himself or an ally. What's more, legal successful procedures were followed in making Prime Minister Choi Kyu Ha acting president after Park's death. We therefore code this event an assassination, even though Park's ouster was a result of concrete actions by a current member of the security services. For a profile of the assassin Kim Jae Kyu, see Fetherling (2001, 211-212).

56. Agreeing with Park's comment, Kim's political rival Cha allegedly (and) rhetorically asked, since Cambodia's regime had no problem after killing three million people, what could go wrong with killing a million demonstrators in Busan and therefore the "troublemakers should be mowed down with tanks" (Shindonga 1996; Ahn 2005).

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